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PREFACE.

I was led to undertake the following Narrative by the perusal of a work, lately published at Paris, entitled "Histoire de l'Homme au Masque de Fer, par J. Delort;" in which the name of that state prisoner is most clearly and satisfactorily ascertained, by means of authentic documents.

Under these circumstances, it may be asked why I was not contented to leave the question, thus set at rest, in the hands of M. Delort, who had the original merit of the discovery:—to this I would answer, that M. Delort's part of the book struck me as peculiarly ill arranged and confused; besides being unnecessarily filled with the most fulsome flattery of Lewis the Fourteenth, never, cer-

tainly, more inappropriately bestowed, than while in the act of recording one of the most cruel and oppressive acts of that Sovereign's cruel and oppressive reign.

I have also thought, that the subject was one of sufficient historical curiosity to interest the English public.

For these reasons I have been induced to throw together the following chain of evidence upon the subject, making use of the same documents as M. Delort, to which I have added some others previously published, and printing the whole series in an Appendix.

G. A. E.

April, 1826.

HISTORY

OF

THE IRON MASK.

THE curiosity of the public has been now, for above a century, so much wrought upon by the mystery which has enveloped the name of the Iron Mask, (or, as the French more properly designate him, "*the Man of the Iron Mask*,"*) that the eagerness for discovery has thus been carried much farther than the real importance of the subject deserved. Numerous have been the papers written, and the conjectures hazarded in favour of different theories; almost all presenting, at first

* "L'homme au masque de fer."

view, some semblance of probability; but all, without exception, crumbling to nothing when exposed to the researches of accurate inquiry. Under these circumstances, it is certainly satisfactory, that the question should be finally set at rest.

It is singular, that among all the inquiries hitherto made respecting the Iron Mask, no one seems ever to have thought of recurring to the only source from whence true information could be derived—the archives of the French Government, during the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth. It was reserved for M. Delort to make these researches; which he did by the permission of the Count d'Hauterive, Keeper of the Archives of the office of Secretary of State for the Foreign department, and the result has been perfectly conclusive. In those archives, he found the continued correspondence of the French ministers, proving, beyond a doubt, that the Iron Mask was an Italian of the name of Matthioli; a personage who was first put on the list of candidates for that honour, in a pamphlet published in 1801, by M.

Roux (Fazillac);* who, however, was then unable to support his opinion with sufficient authorities.

Hercules Anthony Matthioli † was a Bolognese of ancient family, distinguished in the law. He was the son of Valerian Matthioli and Girolama Maggi, and was born on the 1st of December, 1640. On the 13th of January, 1661, he married Camilla, daughter of Bernard Paleotti, and widow of Alexander Piatesi. By her he had two sons, one of whom only had posterity, which has long since been extinct. Early in life he was public reader in the University of Bologna, but he soon quitted his native city to enter into the service of Charles the Third, Duke of Mantua, by whom he was much favoured, and towards the conclusion of

* M. Roux (Fazillac) published several of the documents, since republished by M. Delort, but he does not appear to have seen the whole series; and therefore his reasoning upon the subject is inconclusive. M. Delort has, however, copied a great deal from him in his narrative—whole sentences sometimes, word for word, without any acknowledgment of the plagiarism.

† Delort.

whose reign he was made Secretary of State. His successor, Ferdinand Charles the Fourth, the last sovereign of Mantua, of the house of Gonzaga, created Matthioli Supernumerary Senator of Mantua,—an honour which had formerly been enjoyed by his great grandfather, and gave him the title of Count. When he ceased to be Secretary of State at Mantua does not appear; but he was clearly not in that office when he first, unhappily for himself, was involved in diplomatic relations with the agents of the French Government.

Towards the end of the year 1677, the Abbé d'Estrades,* ambassador from France to the Republic of Venice, conceived the idea, which he was well aware would be highly acceptable to the insatiable ambition of his master, of inducing the

* The Abbé d'Estrades, Ambassador for a considerable time from Lewis the Fourteenth to the Republic of Venice, was son of Godfrey, Count d'Estrades, so long employed in negociations and embassies in Holland, and who was one of the eight Marshals of France made upon the death of Turenne. Madame Cornuel called them, "La Monnoie de M. de Turenne."

Duke of Mantua * to allow of the introduction of a French garrison into Casale,† a strongly fortified town, the capital of the Montferrat, and in a great measure the key of Italy. The cession of the fortress of Pignerol ‡ to the French, by Victor Amadeus, § Duke of Savoy, in 1632, had opened

* Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua, a weak and unfortunate prince. Died July the 5th, 1708, as it is said of poison, administered by a lady he was in love with.

† Casale did not come into the possession of the French till 1681. In 1695, it was taken by the Allies, and its fortifications demolished. It was, however, retaken by the French, and fortified again. The King of Sardinia (Victor Amadeus) made himself master of it in 1706. His successor, Charles Emmanuel, lost it again to the French in 1745, but regained it the following year.

‡ The strong fort of Pignerol, acquired to the Crown of France by the negociations of Richelieu, continued in their possession for 68 years. In 1696, it was restored by treaty to Victor Amadeus II., Duke of Savoy; its fortifications having been previously dismantled.

§ Victor Amadeus I., Duke of Savoy, a prince of great bravery and considerable talent. He married Christina, daughter of Henry IV., King of France, by whom he had two sons, Francis Hyacinth and Charles Emmanuel II., successively Dukes of Savoy. Died October 7th, 1637. He

to them the entry of Piedmont, and the possession of Casale would enable them to invade the Milanese, whenever they were so inclined.

At this time the council of the Duke of Mantua, headed by his mother,* an Austrian Archduchess, was entirely in the interests of the Court of Spain; while the young Duke, plunged in pleasures and excesses of every kind, took little apparent interest in politicks. The great difficulty, therefore, which Estrades had to encounter in the prosecution of this intrigue, was the establishment of a channel of communication with the Duke; who, as has been stated, was surrounded by persons in the Spanish interest. If he could once enter into secret relations with that Prince, he hoped to be able to bribe him into a concurrence in his designs; for Ferdinand Charles was both needy and unprin-

was the first Duke of Savoy who appropriated to himself the title of *Royal Highness.*

* Isabella Clara, of Austria, daughter of the Archduke Leopold, who was grandson of the Emperor Ferdinand III. Married June 13th, 1640, to Charles III., Duke of Mantua.

cipled. He had, besides, discovered, as he writes word to Lewis, in his first letter* to him, dated Venice, Dec. 18th, 1677, that the Duke was not so abandoned to his pleasures, but that he still had some ambition, and much chagrin at the state of subjection in which he was kept by his mother; joined to a great distrust of the Spaniards, who were supposed to foment the divisions of the Court of Mantua, with the view of, eventually, themselves obtaining possession of Casale and the rest of the Montferrat.

The desired channel of communication Estrades thought he had found in Matthioli, who was a complete master of Italian politicks, as well as much in the Duke's good graces. Before, however, he proceeded to enlist him in his service, he deemed it necessary to discover what was the bent of his inclinations. This he effected ingeniously enough, by sending a certain Giuliani, in whom he appears to have placed implicit confidence, to Verona, where Matthioli then was, to act as a spy

* Appendix, No. 1.

upon him. The report of Giuliani, upon his return to Venice, was so favourable, both with regard to the discontent of Matthioli against the Spaniards, "who had always amused him with hopes, and afterwards abandoned him," * and his wish to enter into the service of the French Monarch, that Estrades lost no time in sending him (Giuliani) back again for the purpose of conferring with Matthioli upon the subject of the proposed negociation.

Giuliani was instructed by the Ambassador to enlarge to Matthioli upon the jeopardy which the sovereignty of the Duke of Mantua was in, in consequence of the different pretensions of various branches of his family to his territories, which were more or less countenanced by the Spaniards for the purposes of their own aggrandizement. These were, among others, those of the Empress Eleanor † to the Montferrat; and those of the

* Appendix, No. 1.

† The Empress Eleanor was daughter of Charles, Duke of Rhetelois, who died in the life-time of his father, Charles I., Duke of Mantua, in spite of which he is generally deno-

Marquis of Laguna* to the Duchy of Guastalla, to the prejudice of the Duke of Mantua, who was the rightful heir. Giuliani was also to lament the dependant state of the Duke of Mantua, the revenues of whose states, as well as all the powers of government, were entirely in the hands of his mother, and the Monk Bulgarini;† and to explain the necessity which, on these accounts, existed for that Prince to seek, without delay, the alliance and protection of Lewis the Fourteenth. He was to assure him, in conclusion, that Estrades had no doubt of the readiness of Lewis to assist in freeing

minated by historians, Charles II., Duke of Mantua. She became, on the 30th of April, 1651, the third wife of Ferdinand III., Emperor of Germany, whom she survived many years, and died December 5th, 1686. She was the aunt of Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua

* Thomas de la Cerda, Marquis of Laguna, in Spain, married April 22, 1672, to Maria Louisa, only daughter of Vespasian Gonzaga, only brother of Ferdinand III., the reigning Duke of Guastalla.

† The Monk Bulgarini appears to have been the confessor and favourite of the Duchess-mother of Mantua; and to have been entirely devoted to the Spanish interests.

the Duke of Mantua from his embarrassments; but that, in order to enable him to do this effectually, it was absolutely necessary to garrison Casale with French troops.

Matthioli concurred entirely in these views of Giuliani, and offered to sound the Duke of Mantua upon the subject. A few days afterwards, he sent word to Estrades, that he had managed to have an interview with that Prince (having previously established himself secretly in the neighbourhood of Mantua), and had found him generally well-disposed to the plan. He also requested Estrades to send Giuliani again to him, in order that they might act in concert; the said Giuliani being also a person who might, without suspicion, carry intelligence backwards and forwards,* which was not the case with Matthioli himself.

Giuliani was accordingly sent, and had an audi-

* The profession of Giuliani was that of an editor of newspapers, in which capacity he was in the habit of travelling from town to town, to collect and convey news. See Appendix, No. 98.

ence of the Duke of Mantua, who received him very favourably, and acquainted him with his willingness to enter into an alliance with France, and to deliver up Casale, upon the understanding that Estrades was to try to obtain for him any reasonable requests he might make; the principal of these, in addition to the grant of a sum of money, was the being made generalissimo of any French army that might be sent into Italy, "that being," says Estrades, "what he wishes beyond all things; or rather, that being the only thing he is very anxious for, in order that he may have the same consideration in Italy the late Duke of Modena* had, and the late Duke of Mantua,† who at his age commanded in

* Alphonso IV., Duke of Modena, succeeded his father Francis I. in his territories, and in the command in chief of the French army in Italy, in 1658. Died in the 29th year of his age, July 16, 1662, having married, May 27, 1655, Laura Martinozzi, niece of Cardinal Mazarin.

† Charles III., Duke of Mantua, father of Ferdinand Charles IV., the reigning Duke, had the command of the Imperial Army in Italy, and took upon himself the office of

chief the Emperor's army, with the title of Vicar General of the Empire." *

The Duke of Mantua also announced in this conference, that he put himself, on this occasion, entirely into the hands of Matthioli, whom he promised to reinstate in his place of Secretary of State, and to appoint his first minister, as soon as he himself should have regained his authority, and that the treaty, he was now projecting with the King of France, had been duly executed.

To Matthioli were joined in the negociation the two counsellors of the Duke of Mantua, in whom he had the most confidence; the Marquis Cavriani and Joseph Varano; and these, together

Vicar General of the Empire in Italy, during the interregnum which followed the death of the Emperor Ferdinand III. in 1657, in virtue of a diploma, lately granted to him by that Prince. His right was contested by the Duke of Savoy, who, upon the ground of old usage, claimed the office for himself. The Electors of the Empire annulled the appointment of the Duke of Mantua.

* Appendix, No. 1.

with Giuliani, Estrades, Pinchesne the French Secretary of Embassy at Venice, and the Duke himself, were the only persons in Italy acquainted with the business; so that the Ambassador had certainly very fair grounds for expressing his hopes, "that the secrecy, so necessary in this affair, would remain impenetrable."*

This conference was followed by another, in which the Duke showed the greatest impatience to conclude the treaty; entreating that Lewis might be instantly made acquainted with the state it was at present in, and requesting, or rather imploring, for a French army; on the arrival of which he hinted much might be done against the Duchy of Milan. Finally, he promised to have a conference with Estrades, "as he was soon going to Venice, where they might see one another conveniently, and without being observed, on account of the Carnival, during which all the world, even the Doge and the

* Appendix, No. 1.

oldest Senators, were accustomed to go about in mask." *

He also requested that the Cardinal d'Estrées† might not be made a party to the negociation; because he was so well known to be employed generally by Lewis to negociate with the Italian Sovereigns, that his entering into it would naturally excite the suspicions of the Spaniards that something secret was going on; and that they would then ruin him, the Duke of Mantua, before he could receive the assistance of the French Monarch; and that thus the hopes of both the con-

* Appendix, No. 1.

† Cæsar, Bishop of Laon and Cardinal d'Estrées, son of the first Marshal of France of that name, was employed in various negociations with the Princes of Italy; but is now more remembered for his courtier-like reply to Lewis XIV. That Monarch one day at dinner complained of having lost all his teeth. "And who is there, Sire, that has any teeth?" said the Cardinal (Sire, et qui est-ce qui a des dents?) What made the flattery the more ludicrously gross was, that the Cardinal, though an old man, had remarkably fine teeth, and showed them very much whenever he opened his mouth.

tracting parties, from the treaty at present under discussion, would be frustrated. To this proposition Estrades agreed, though unwillingly. We cannot but here remark how skilful a negociator he seems to have been; beginning as he does by making trial of his tools, and then of his arguments, and afterwards bringing both of them to bear very judiciously on the negociation, in the way the most likely to lead to a favourable result.

When the affair was advanced thus far, Estrades lost no time in forwarding an account of it to Lewis, to whom, as he says himself, he had not before ventured to write upon the subject, because at first he despaired of being able to bring the intrigue to bear: but he now thought it in so good a train, that, upon receiving the approval of his proceedings from Lewis, he could almost answer for its success. The letter of Estrades was accompanied by a schedule, containing the demands of the Duke of Mantua, and by a letter from Matthioli, also addressed to Lewis, in which he offers to devote himself to his service, to strive to detach his

master, the Duke of Mantua, from the Austrian interest, and insinuates very plainly his wish and intention of selling him and his fortress of Casale to the French Monarch; whom, he says, he "regards and reveres as a *Demigod*."* To these protestations Lewis returned, as was natural, a very civil answer;† generally promising his protection and favour to Matthioli.

On the 24th of December of the same year, Estrades‡ writes to M. de Pomponne,§ (then one of the Secretaries of State,) to inform him of a discovery he has made from the Duke of Mantua himself, that the Austrian party have

* Appendix, No. 2. † Appendix, No. 8.

‡ 1677.

§ Simon Arnaud de Pomponne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1671 to 1679, when he was dismissed from his office, but retained the title of Minister of State, with permission to attend the Council. A man, like so many of his race, who united considerable talents to great excellence of character. Madame de Sévigné says, in speaking of the eminent station he had filled, that "Fortune had wished to make use of his virtues for the happiness of others."

determined, in case any French troops should arrive in Italy, and that the Duke of Mantua should manifest any disposition of favouring them, to seize upon Casale and Mantua. He therefore adds that the Duke, though thoroughly well-disposed towards the French interests, cannot take any active part in their favour, unless Lewis will send into Italy a sufficient force to secure Casale and the rest of the Duke's territories from the attempts of the House of Austria. He subsequently seems to hint his fear that the life of the Duke of Mantua may be made away with by the Austrians, in order the more easily to possess themselves of his territories. "We must besides, Sir, consider that the Duke of Guastalla* being the nearest relation of the Duke of Mantua, as well as his heir, there would be danger that, if the

* Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, descended from a younger branch of the House of Gonzaga; and the heir to the Duchy of Mantua, if he survived Ferdinand Charles; which however was not the case. He died of dropsy, January 11th, 1678.

Duchess,* his daughter, who is very ill and has no children, should die, some *misfortune* might happen to the Duke of Mantua, which would assure his territories to the Spanish Nobleman, who has married the second daughter† of the Duke of Guastalla, and whose marriage the Spaniards, *doubtless with this view*, made up at Vienna by means of Don Vincent."‡

* Anne Isabella, eldest daughter of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, married August 13th, 1671, to Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua, by whom she had no offspring.

† This is evidently a mistake, and should be read *niece* instead of *second daughter*. It alludes to Maria Louisa, only daughter of Vespasian Gonzaga, only brother of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, married to a Spanish nobleman, Thomas de la Cerda, Marquis of Laguna. At this time neither of the daughters of Ferdinand had children, and *she*, consequently, after them, was the heiress of their claims upon the Duchies of Guastalla and Mantua. The second daughter of Ferdinand III., Maria Victoria, married June 30th, 1679, Vincent Gonzaga, Count of St. Paul—the person who is here erroneously described as having been the means of marrying her to another person.

‡ Vincent Gonzaga, Count of St. Paul, afterwards Duke of Guastalla, was descended from a younger son of

To Estrades, Lewis returned a long and detailed statement of his views; in which he approves generally of the design of putting a French garrison into Casale; intimates upon what terms it may be done; rejects a request of the Duke of Mantua to procure for him the restoration of those parts of the Montferrat, which by former treaties had been ceded to the Duke of Savoy; objects to the largeness of his demand of 100,000 pistoles as the price of Casale; promises to bear him harmless and remunerate him for any injury that may be done to him by the Spaniards, in consequence of his siding with the French; and finally instructs Estrades, to entertain the notion that a French

Ferrant II., first Duke of Guastalla. After contesting for many years his right to that Duchy with Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua; during which they were both merely made use of, by turns, as the instruments of the French and Austrian domination; he was finally successful in establishing himself at Guastalla in 1706, where he died April 28th, 1714. By his wife, Maria Victoria, second daughter of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, he left two sons, who successively succeeded him in the sovereignty of that Duchy.

army is about to pass the Alps, and in the mean while to protract the negociation, in order to allow him, Lewis, time to make his various preparations. Indeed this last point, the necessity for delay, was so strongly impressed upon Estrades, upon more than one occasion, that, in a subsequent despatch, he expresses his regret that the negociation goes on so smoothly and prosperously, that he cannot find any difficulties* to enable him to protract it till the troops of Lewis are in readiness to march towards Italy.

The only point in dispute appears to have been, what the sum of money should be which was to be given by the French Monarch to the Duke of Mantua. The stipulation for 100,000 pistoles was decidedly rejected by Lewis; and at length, after some difficulty, Estrades reduced the demand of the other party to 100,000 crowns, and those not to be paid till after the signature of the treaty between the two sovereigns.†

* Appendix, No. 9. † Appendix, No. 10.

The next event of importance in the negociation was the interview, effected at Venice during the Carnival, between the Duke of Mantua and Estrades. It took place at midnight, on the 13th of March, 1678, in a small open space, equally distant from the residence of the Duke and the Ambassador, and lasted a full hour. In it the Duke dwelt * much upon his impatience for the conclusion of the treaty with France; and for the speedy appearance of the troops of the latter in Italy, alleging as his reason, the constant and lively fear he was in of the Spaniards. He also announced his intention of sending Matthioli, in whom, says Estrades, "He has a blind confidence, and who governs him absolutely," to the French court; thinking that his presence there might bring matters to a speedier issue.

Estrades, who had now ascertained that his master could not possibly spare an army for Italy that year (1678), and who therefore was more than ever

* Appendix, No. 17.

anxious to prevent such a consummation, consented with considerable difficulty to the project; resolving, at the same time, to obstruct the departure of Matthioli for France as long as possible; and writing to M. de Pomponne to delay him and his business, when at length he arrived there, by every means in his power. *

Subsequently the procrastinating intentions of Estrades were more easily put into execution than he expected; for Matthioli, of his own accord, deferred his journey from spring to autumn on various pleas, of which the principal one was, his unwillingness to leave his master, exposed to the insinuations, and perhaps menaces, of the Spanish partizans, by whom he was surrounded. †

Finally, after many delays, Matthioli, accompanied by Giuliani, set off for Paris in the beginning of November, 1678, and arrived there towards the end of the same month.‡ He found the Abbé d'Estrades, who had quitted his Venetian Em-

* Appendix, No. 18. † Appendix, Nos. 24, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40. ‡ Appendix, No. 47.

bassy, arrived there before him, and had several interviews with him and M. de Pomponne; during which a treaty was agreed on to the following effect:—

1. That the Duke of Mantua should receive the French troops into Casale.

2. That if Lewis sent an army into Italy, the Duke of Mantua should have the command of it.

3. That immediately after the execution of the treaty, the sum of 100,000 crowns should be paid to the Duke of Mantua.*

The treaty contained also some other articles of minor importance.

Matthioli himself had the honour of being received in a secret audience by Lewis,† who made him a present of a valuable ring.† He also received a sum of money for himself,† and a promise

* Delort, quoting from an Italian manuscript, in the records of the office of the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which appears to have been written by Giuliani.

† Delort, quoting from the same authority.

of a much larger gratification* after the ratification of the treaty. He was also promised that his son should be made one of the King's Pages; and that his brother, who was in the Church, should receive a good benefice.† He was then sent back to Italy, with a detailed instruction from Louvois,‡ upon the manner of executing the articles of the treaty.

The French Government was thus far so en-

* M. Delort says the sum actually given to Matthioli, was 400 Doubles, and the sum promised him 400,000 Doubles, which, from its largeness, he conceives must be a mistake; but he adds that it is so written in the Italian manuscripts before referred to.

† Delort.

‡ Francis Michael Le Tellier, Marquis de Louvois, son of the Chancellor Le Tellier, Secretary of State for the War department, from 1666, to the time of his death, in 1691, which occurring suddenly, and just as he was on the point of being disgraced, gave occasion to a report that he was poisoned: for which, however, it appears there was no foundation. He was of a haughty and cruel disposition, and was the minister who planned and ordered the inhuman ravages of the Palatinate, which have so indelibly disgraced the reign of his master.

tirely satisfied of the sincerity and good faith of Matthioli, and so convinced of the speedy admission of the French troops into Casale, that they immediately upon his departure took decided measures in furtherance of their plan. * Thus the Marquis de Boufflers,† Colonel-General of the Dragoons, was sent to take the command of the forces, which were assembling near the frontier of Italy, at Briançon, in Dauphiny. Catinat, ‡ Brigadier of Infantry, afterwards the celebrated Marshal of that name, who was to serve under the command of Boufflers, had orders to conceal himself in the fortress of Pignerol, § and to adopt a feigned name,

* Delort.

† Lewis Francis, Marquis and afterwards Duke de Boufflers, Marshal of France in 1693. Died in 1711. One of the best of Lewis the Fourteenth's generals.

‡ Nicholas de Catinat, Marshal of France in 1698. "He united," says Voltaire, "philosophy to great military talents. The last day he commanded in Italy, he gave for the watch-word, 'Paris and St. Gratien,' the name of his country house. He died there in the retirement of a real sage, (having refused the blue ribbon) in 1712."

§ Upon reference to the Mémoires de Catinat, published

that of Richemont;* while the Baron d'Asfeld,† Colonel of Dragoons, was despatched to Venice, upon a mission for exchanging the ratifications of the treaty; for which purpose he was to unite with M. de Pinchesne, the Chargé d'Affaires there during the absence of an ambassador.‡

in 1819, this event is found to be thus adverted to:—"In 1679, Catinat was charged with some negociations with the Duke of Mantua; but the affair failed of success, in consequence of the treachery of the Secretary of that prince. Catinat, according to the King's orders, was anxious to punish the traitor. He remained at Pignerol some days, and having engaged him in a hunting party, had him arrested." It also appears from these Memoirs, that both Catinat and Boufflers were again despatched to Italy on the same errand, in 1681, when Casale was really given up to Lewis; and on this occasion, Louvois, in his instruction to Boufflers, mentions Matthioli by name, as the person whose treachery had prevented the success of the former negociation.

* Appendix, Nos. 52, 62, 64, 73, 76, 77, 78.

† I am not sure whether I am correct in imagining that this was the Marshal d'Asfeld, who distinguished himself at the battle of Almanza, and died at great old age, in 1743.

‡ Appendix, Nos. 52, 54, 55.

Though these measures were taken with the greatest secrecy, it was impossible but that the report of the assembling of the French forces so near the territories of the Duke of Savoy,* should reach the ears of the Spaniards, and excite their suspicions; as well as those of the Venetians, and of the other Italian states. Accordingly, we find that remonstrances were several times made by the ambassadors of the Emperor† and King of Spain‡ at Venice, to the Duke of Mantua, upon the rumour of his intention of delivering the capital of the

* Victor Amadeus II., at this time a minor, and under the Regency of his mother, Mary Jane Baptista de Nemours. In 1713, he became King of Sicily, which kingdom he was compelled to exchange for that of Sardinia, in 1720; abdicated the throne in favour of his son, in 1730; and died in 1732. This prince possessed in an eminent degree, the attributes of his race—valour and skill in military matters, and faithlessness in his treaties and engagements with his brother sovereigns.

† Leopold I. succeeded Ferdinand III. in 1657, died in 1705.

‡ Charles II. the last King of Spain of the House of Austria.—Died in 1700.

Montferrat to Lewis. Ferdinand Charles denied that this was the case;* but was not believed.

As, therefore, the ferment and discontent in the north of Italy increased, the agents of the French Government were naturally anxious that the treaty should be ratified and executed as soon as possible; for which purpose, the Duke of Mantua had promised to meet the Baron d'Asfeld at Casale, during the month of February, 1679. In proportion, however, as the French became more impatient for the conclusion of the affair, the Count Matthioli found fresh excuses for delaying it. At one moment his own ill health detained him at Padua, and prevented his coming to Venice to confer with Messrs. de Pinchesne and d'Asfeld; at another, the Duke of Mantua could not raise a sufficient sum of money to enable him to transport his court to Casale; at another, it was necessary to have time to persuade Don Vincent Gonzaga† to accompany the Duke to Casale, as it was not considered safe

* Appendix, Nos. 68, 69, 89. † See ante, note, page 18.

to leave him at Mantua; and again, the Duke of Mantua was obliged to stay at Venice, having promised to hold a carrousel there.*

In spite of all these difficulties, it was, however, finally arranged, that the Baron d'Asfeld and Matthioli should meet, on the 9th of March, at Incréa, a village ten miles from Casale, in order to make the exchange of the ratifications; that the Duke of Mantua himself, should go to Casale on the 15th of the same month; and should put the troops of Lewis into possession of the place on the 18th; on which day, being the ninth after the ratification, it was decided they could without fail be there.†

The various excuses made by Matthioli, for the non-execution of his agreement, all more or less frivolous, appear first to have given to the French Government a suspicion of his fidelity. Whether the reception of Matthioli at the French court had not been such as he expected, though it would

* Appendix, No. 66. † Appendix, No. 68.

appear to have been most gracious; or whether, which is more probable, the sum of money there given to him did not content him;—or whether, which is also probable, the Spaniards having got some knowledge of the transaction, had offered him a still larger bribe, it is impossible for us, at this distance of time, exactly to decide; but it appears evident, that, from the time of his return from Paris, his conduct with regard to the negociation became entirely changed; and he was as anxious to procrastinate, as he had formerly been to advance it. It was, therefore, natural for the French diplomatists to conclude, supported as this opinion also was by various circumstantial evidence, that he had been bought by the other side—a circumstance of no extraordinary occurrence in the career of a needy Italian adventurer.

His weak and timid master followed implicitly his counsels; but appears to have been himself in the intention of acting fairly and faithfully by the French Government. The first intimation that is given in the correspondence of the suspicions, with

regard to the conduct of Matthioli, occurs in a letter from Pomponne * to Matthioli himself, dated February 21st, 1679, in which he says that Lewis "is unwilling to doubt that the promise which has been so solemnly made † him will not be kept;" an expression which certainly seems to imply, that some doubt did exist in the mind of Lewis and of his ministers upon the subject.

The next is an elaborate and skilful letter of Estrades to Matthioli, written on the 24th of March, 1679, ‡ from Turin, where he was then awaiting the execution of the treaty, in which he mingles promises and threats to encourage him to perform his stipulations; and shows sufficiently his suspicions to the object of them, to frighten him; at the same time leaving open the hope of forgiveness in case of future good conduct.

By the subsequent letters § of Pomponne to

* Appendix, No. 67.

† Namely, of the delivery of Casale.

‡ Appendix, No. 72.

§ Appendix, Nos. 75, 79, 81, 83, 88.

Pinchesne, it appears, that the treachery of Matthioli soon became more apparent. Indeed, Estrades, during his stay at Turin, obtained the most indubitable evidence of the fact; for the Duchess of Savoy * showed to him the copies of all the documents relative to the negociation respecting Casale, which Matthioli had given to the President Turki, one of her ministers who was in the interests of Spain, when he passed through Turin on his return from Paris.† From Turki, as it subsequently appeared, Matthioli had received a sum of money for his information.‡

Meanwhile Asfeld was arrested by the orders of the Count de Melgar, the Spanish Governor of the Milanese, as he was on his way to the rendez-

* Mary Jane Baptista of Savoy, daughter of Charles Amadeus, Duke of Nemours and Aumale, (who was killed in a duel by his brother-in-law, the Duke of Beaufort). Married May 11th, 1665, to Charles Emmanuel II., Duke of Savoy; Regent of the territories of her son during his minority. Died March 15th, 1724.

† Delort. Appendix, Nos. 87, 92, 95.

‡ Appendix, No. 92.

vous at Incréa; and Matthioli was the first person who acquainted the French agents with this misfortune,* as well as with the fact that the Duke of Mantua had been obliged to conclude a treaty with the Venetians, in a directly contrary sense to the one he had first entered into with France;† "having probably been," as Pomponne remarks, in a letter to Pinchesne,‡ "himself the sole author of the accidents and impediments he acquaints us with."

Upon the arrival of the intelligence at Paris, of the arrest of Asfeld, the French ministers, though their suspicions of Matthioli were now changed into certainties, being still anxious, if possible, to get possession of Casale, empowered Catinat to supply his place, and to conclude the ratification of the treaty. Intelligence of this change was conveyed to Matthioli in a letter § from Pomponne, of the date of March 14th, 1679.

Catinat accordingly went, on the appointed day,

* Appendix, No. 70. † Delort.
‡ Appendix, No. 75. § Appendix, No. 71.

from Pignerol to Incréa, accompanied by St. Mars,* the Commandant of that part of the fortress of Pignerol, which was appropriated for a state prison, and by a person of confidence, belonging to the embassy of Estrades. But the appointed day passed over, without bringing Matthioli to Incréa; and the next morning Catinat was informed that his arrival there was discovered; that the peasants of the neighbourhood were in arms; and that a detachment of cavalry was on its way, for the purpose of seizing upon him and his companions. What became of the latter does not appear, except that they escaped the threatened danger; but he himself got away secretly, and in disguise, to Casale; where he gave himself out as an officer of the gar-

* Benigne d'Auvergne de Saint-Mars, Seigneur of Dimon and Palteau; Bailli and Governor of Sens; successively Governor of Exiles, the Island of St. Marguerite, and the Bastille. At Pignerol he had only the command of the state prisoners, the Marquis d'Herleville being governor of the fortress. St. Mars came to Pignerol a short time before the arrival there of Fouquet, who was the first prisoner confided to his care.

rison of Pignerol. The Governor there, who was well-disposed to the French interest, received him with great civility; and, at a dinner he gave to him, joined in drinking the King of France's health with enthusiasm.* The next day Catinat was too happy to return undiscovered to Pignerol.

Matthioli, meanwhile, instead of keeping his engagement at Incréa, had returned to Venice, and had had several interviews with Pinchesne, the particulars of which we are unacquainted with, as the letters containing the accounts of them, though alluded to by M. de Pomponne † in his answers, have not been published.

Pinchesne was, at this time, convinced of the perfidy of Matthioli, having, in addition to various other suspicious circumstances, discovered that he had been secretly at Milan for some days. He, however, did not think it advisable entirely to break with him; but advised him to go and confer with Estrades, at Turin; representing to

* Roux (Fazillac.)

† Appendix, Nos 79, 81.

him the danger to which he exposed himself, if this affair failed of success through his fault.* Matthioli followed the advice of Pinchesne to his own ruin, and going to Turin, presented himself forthwith to Estrades,† to whom he offered many insufficient excuses for his delay.

The vindictive Lewis had, meanwhile, determined to satisfy his wounded pride and frustrated ambition, by taking the most signal vengeance of Matthioli; as we find by the following note from Louvois to his creature, St. Mars, dated, St. Germain, April 27th, 1679:—"The King has sent orders to the Abbé d'Estrades, to try and arrest a man, with whose conduct his Majesty has reason to be dissatisfied; of which he has commanded me to acquaint you, in order that you may not object to receiving him when he shall be sent t you; and that you may guard him in a manner that not only he may not have communication wit any one, but that also he may have cause to r

* Delort. † Appendix, No. 88.

pent of his bad conduct; and that it may not be discovered that you have a new prisoner."*

Nothing therefore could be more opportune to Estrades, than the arrival of Matthioli at Turin, and accident soon enabled him to lay a successful plan for executing the wishes of the French monarch. The plan he is said to have communicated to the Duchess of Savoy, who consented to the arrest taking place, but objected to its happening on her territories.†

Matthioli complained much of want of money, occasioned by the expenses of his journeys, and the bribes he had been obliged to offer to the Duke's mistresses. Estrades took this opportunity of forwarding his scheme, by telling him that Catinat, who, under the name of Richemont, commanded the troops destined to take possession of Casale, had considerable sums at his disposal, which he would be happy to make so good a use of as in ministering to his wants; provided he, Matthioli, would give him a meeting on the fron-

* Appendix, No. 82. † Delort.

tier towards Pignerol, at which also Estrades would be present.* Of course, the reason assigned for naming the frontier as the place of rendezvous was, that Catinat could not leave the neighbourhood where his troops were stationed.

To this proposition Matthioli readily consented; and having first made a journey to Casale, he returned and met Estrades (who was accompanied on this expedition by his relation the Abbé de Montesquiou) by appointment, in a church half a mile from Turin, from whence they proceeded together to the frontier. At three miles from the place of rendezvous they were stopped by a river, of which the banks were overflowed, and the bridge broken. Matthioli himself assisted in repairing the bridge, which was to convey him to his captivity;† and they then proceeded on foot to the place where Catinat awaited them

* M. Roux (Fazillac) gives these particulars, upon the authority of a letter from Estrades to Pomponne, of May 7th, 1679; and of one from Catinat to Louvois of the same date; neither of which are published.

† Roux (Fazillac.)

accompanied only by two officers, the Chevaliers de St. Martin and de Villebois, and by four soldiers of the garrison of Pignerol.*

Before, however, Matthioli was arrested, Estrades held some conversation with him, and obliged him, in the presence of Catinat, to confess that he had in his possession all the original papers regarding the delivery of Casale, and that they were left in the custody of his wife at Bologna; who was living in the convent of the nuns of St. Thomas † in that city. This was necessary, because Matthioli had lately refused to give them up to the Duke his master, ‡ alleging that he no longer knew where they were. His confession, upon this occasion, afterwards turned out to be false, and that the papers in question were concealed in a wall at Padua.§

Immediately after this avowal had been extracted from him, he was arrested; and offered no resistance, though he always carried a sword

* Appendix, No. 84. † Ibid. ‡ Delort.
§ Appendix, No. 85.

and pistols about his person. He was conducted to Pignerol, where he arrived late at night.

Catinat, in his letter to Louvois, giving an account of this seizure, which took place on the 2d of May, 1679, dwells much upon the secrecy with which it was effected, so that, says he, "no one knows the name of the rascal, not even the officers who assisted in arresting him."* And he concludes by mentioning, that in order to perpetuate the mystery in which his prisoner is enveloped, he has given him the name of "Lestang,"—"not a soul here knowing who he is." In the subsequent correspondence of Louvois with Catinat and St. Mars, he is very generally designated by that name. At first, St. Mars carried his precaution so far as to serve Matthioli himself, and not allow any of the garrison to approach him; soon afterwards his valet, who had been arrested by the exertions of Estrades,† was allowed to attend upon him; and subsequently St. Mars appointed those of his officers, in whom he had the most

* Appendix, No. 84. † Ibid. No. 85.

confidence, to assist in guarding him. It may be remembered that Louvois, in his letter to St. Mars, which has been before quoted, orders that the prisoner, who was to be brought to Pignerol, "should have intercourse with no one;" and in the subsequent letters from the same Minister, difficulties are even made to his being permitted to see either a physician or a confessor.*

These extraordinary precautions against discovery, and the one which appears to have been afterwards resorted to, of obliging him to wear a mask, during his journeys, or when he saw any one, are not wonderful, when we reflect upon the violent breach of the law of nations, which had been committed by his imprisonment. Matthioli, at the time of his arrest, was actually the plenipotentiary† of the Duke of Mantua, for concluding a treaty with the King of France; and for that very sovereign to kidnap him and confine him in a dungeon was certainly one of the most

* Appendix, Nos. 96, 103, 104. † Ibid. No. 48.

flagrant acts of violence that could be committed; one which, if known, would have had the most injurious effects upon the negociations of Lewis with other sovereigns; nay, would probably have indisposed other sovereigns from treating at all with him. It is true the Duke of Mantua was a prince insignificant both in power and character, but, if in this way might was allowed to overcome right, who could possibly tell whose turn might be the next? Besides, it was important for Lewis that the Duke of Mantua should also be kept in good humour, the delivery of Casale not having been effected; nor is it to be supposed that he would have consented to give it up to the French monarch within two years of this period, had he had a suspicion of the way his diplomatic agent and intended prime minister had been treated. The same reasons for concealment existed till the death of Matthioli, since that event happened while both Lewis XIV. and the Duke of Mantua were still alive, which accounts for

his confinement continuing to be always solitary and always secret.

The arrest of Matthioli certainly appears to have been the effect of a vindictive feeling against him in the breast of Lewis himself; for it is impossible to imagine that any minister would have ventured, of his own free-will, upon a step by which so much was to be hazarded, and nothing, in fact, was to be gained. The act is only to be explained in this manner: that the monarch insisted upon his revenge, which the ministers were obliged to gratify; and, at the same time, in order to prevent any ill consequences that might result from it, determined upon burying the whole transaction under the most impenetrable veil of mystery.

The confinement of Matthioli is decidedly one of the deadliest stains that blot the character of Lewis the Fourteenth: for, granting that Matthioli betrayed the trust reposed in him by that monarch, one single act of diplomatic treachery was surely not sufficient to warrant the infliction of the most

horrible of all punishments,—of solitary confinement, for four and twenty years, in a dungeon!—It was, however, an act of cruel injustice that was to be expected from the man, who, when the unhappy Fouquet* was condemned by the tribunals of his country to exile, himself changed his sentence to that of perpetual imprisonment;—who, to please his mistress, confined his former favourite, Lauzun,† for nine years in the fortress of Pignerol, and only then released him in order, by that means, to

* Nicholas Fouquet, "Surintendant des Finances," in 1653. The most lavish, but the most amiable of financiers. Disgraced in 1664, when he was condemned, by the commissioners appointed to inquire into his conduct, to banishment. The sentence was commuted by the King himself to perpetual imprisonment; and Fouquet died in the citadel of Pignerol, in 1680. On his trial he defended himself with great spirit and talent. See Madame de Sevigné's interesting Letters to M. de Pomponne upon the subject.

† Anthony Nompar de Caumont, Marquis of Peguilhem, and afterwards Duke of Lauzun: whose adventures and eccentricities are too well known to require relation here. It is in speaking of him that La Bruyère says, "Il n'est pas permis aux autres hommes de rêver, comme il a vecu."

swindle Mademoiselle de Montpensier* out of her fortune, in favour of his bastard, the Duke du Maine;—who shut up so many other persons, guilty only of imaginary crimes, in various prisons,†

* Anne Mary Louisa, of Orleans, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, commonly called the "Grande Mademoiselle."—A woman of an unpleasant character, according to her own showing in her Memoirs; but who certainly did not deserve to be the victim, as she was, in different ways, of two such men as Lewis and Lauzun.

† One of the most remarkable instances of unjust and cruel imprisonment inflicted by Lewis the Fourteenth, is that of a young scholar, of the Jesuits' College, at Paris. That college had always, from its founder, borne the name of the "College de Clermont;" and over its gateway, in consequence, appeared the following inscription,—

"Collegium Claromontanum Societatis Jesu."

Upon a certain occasion, in the year 1674, Lewis the Fourteenth was present at the representation of a tragedy, performed by the scholars of the college, which was much applauded by the audience, in consequence of its containing various pieces of flattery addressed to him. At its conclusion, one of the courtiers said something to the King respecting its extraordinary success. "Faut-il s'en étonner?" replied the modest Lewis, "c'est mon college." "Is it wonderful that *my* college should act well?" The rector, who heard the monarch's speech, immediately gave orders to take down

where they died of misery and ill-treatment;-
who revoked the Edict of Nantes;—ordered the
burning of the Palatinate;—persecuted the saints
of Port Royal;—and gloried in the Dragonade
and the war of the Cevennes;—who, in s
whether we regard him as a man or a sovere
was one of the most hardened, cruel, and tyranni
characters transmitted to us in history. Pro
dence doubtless made use of him as a scourge be-
fitting the crimes of the age he lived in; and
this point of view, his existence was most u

the old inscription over the gateway, and to substitute

"Collegium Ludovici Magni."

The change was executed that very night, and the colle
ever after bore the name of "College Louis le Gran
Upon this change the following Latin epigram was writte

"Sustulit hinc Jesum, posuitque insignia regis
Impia gens, alium nescit habere Deum."

Which was thus translated,

"La croix fait place aux lis, et Jesus Christ au roi;
Louis, O race impie, est le seul Dieu chez toi."

The author of the Latin lines was discovered to be a scholar of the college, *aged only sixteen.* He was immediately thrown into the Bastille, and *remained in prison, in consequence of this one offence, for thirty-one years!!!*—See Dulaure's "Histoire de Paris."

Nor is his memory less so; which has been left to us and to all posterity, as a mighty warning of the effects, even in this world, of overweening ambition; and as a melancholy example of the perdition of a proud heart, which "gave not God the glory," and was therefore abandoned by the Mighty to the effects of its own natural and irretrievable wickedness.

After the arrest of Matthioli, he underwent several interrogatories,* in which, in spite of his numerous prevarications, his treachery was still more fully discovered. The examinations were all sent to Louvois by Catinat, who, as soon as they were concluded, left Pignerol, and returned to the Court.†

At first, Matthioli was, by the direction of Esmades,‡ well treated in his prison; but this was not by any means the intention of Lewis, and accordingly, we find Louvois writing thus to St. Mars. "It is not the intention of the King that the Sieur de Lestang should be *well-treated;* nor

* Appendix, Nos. 85, 87, 91, 92, 94, 95, 97.
† Ibid. No. 97. ‡ Ibid. No. 84, 85.

that, except the absolute necessaries of life, you should give him any thing that may make him pass his time agreeably."* Again, in the same strain: "I have nothing to add to what I have already commanded you respecting the severity with which the individual named Lestang must be treated."† And again; "You must keep the individual named Lestang, in the severe confinement I enjoined in my preceding letters, without allowing him to see a physician, unless you know he is in absolute want of one."‡ These repeated injunctions to the same effect are a proof, how much importance the rancorous Lewis attached to his victim's being compelled to drink the bitter cup of captivity to the very dregs.

The harshness and hopelessness of his prison seem to have affected the intellects of Matthioli,§ for after he had been nearly a year confined, St. Mars acquaints Louvois, that "The Sieur de Lestang complains, he is not treated as a man of

* Appendix, No. 90. † Ibid. No. 93.
‡ Ibid. No 96. § Ibid. No. 101.

his quality, and the minister of a great prince ought to be; notwithstanding which, I continue to follow your commands most exactly upon this subject, as well as on all others. I think he is deranged by the way he talks to me, telling me he converses every day with God and his angels;—that they have told him of the death of the Duke of Mantua and of the Duke of Lorrain;* and as an additional proof of his madness, he says, that he has the honour of being the near relation of the King, to whom he wishes to write, to complain of

* Charles IV. or V., for he is sometimes called one and sometimes the other, was the son of Nicholas Francis, Cardinal, and afterwards Duke of Lorrain. On the death of his uncle, Charles IV., he took the barren titles of Duke of Lorrain and Bar, but never obtained possession of his territories, (which were usurped by France,) "though his military, political, and Christian virtues and talents, made him worthy to occupy the first throne in the universe." He commanded the armies of the Emperor for some years with the greatest distinction, married the Archduchess Eleanor, widow of Michael Wiecnowiecki, King of Poland, and died in 1690. Lewis the Fourteenth, on hearing of his death, said of him, "that he was the greatest, wisest, and most generous of his enemies."

the way in which I treat him. I have not thought it right to give him paper or ink for that purpose, perceiving him not to be in his right senses."*

The unhappy prisoner, in his phrensy and despair, sometimes used very violent language to his keepers, and wrote abusive sentences with charcoal on the walls of his prison; on which account St. Mars ordered his lieutenant, Blainvilliers, to threaten him with punishment, and even to show him a cudgel, with which he was to be beaten, if he did not behave better.

These menaces so far intimidated Matthioli, that a few days afterwards, while Blainvilliers was serving him at dinner, he, in order to propitiate him, took a valuable ring from his finger and offered it to him. Blainvilliers told him he could accept nothing from a prisoner, but that he would deliver it to St. Mars; which he accordingly did.† St. Mars estimates the ring at fifty or sixty pistoles: and M. Delort conjectures it to have been the one

* Appendix, No. 102. † Appendix, No. 107.

given to him by Lewis the Fourteenth, during his stay at Paris. St. Mars inquires from Louvois* what he is to do in consequence; and the latter returns for answer, that he "must keep the ring, which the Sieur Matthioli has given to the Sieur de Blainvilliers, in order to restore it to him, if it should ever happen that the King ordered him to be set at liberty."†

Matthioli apparently expressed a wish to confess to a priest; and Louvois desires that he may be only allowed to do so once in the year.‡ It appears that St. Mars had at this time in his custody a Jacobin monk, with whose crime, as well as name, we are unacquainted; but in the correspondence of St. Mars and Louvois, he is designated as "the Jacobin in the lower part of the tower." This man was mad; very possibly had been made so, like Matthioli, by solitary confinement and ill-usage. St. Mars advised the putting Matthioli with him, in order to avoid the neces-

* Appendix, No. 106. † Appendix, No. 108.
‡ Appendix, No. 103.

sity of sending for a priest for each prisoner.* To this proposal Louvois returned the following answer: "I have been made acquainted, by your letter of the 7th of this month (August 1680), with the proposal you make, to put the Sieur de Lestang with the Jacobin, in order to avoid the necessity of having two priests. The King approves of your project, and you have only to execute it when you please."†

St. Mars, in a letter of the 7th of September, 1680, thus details the results of the execution of his plan:—

"Since you permitted me to put Matthioli with the Jacobin in the lower part of the tower, the aforesaid Matthioli was, for four or five days, in the belief that the Jacobin was a man that I had placed with him to watch his actions. Matthioli, who is almost as mad as the Jacobin, walked about with long strides, with his cloak over his nose, crying out that he was not a dupe, but that he knew more than he would say. The Jacobin,

* Appendix, 104. † Ibid.

who was always seated on his truckle bed, with his elbows resting upon his knees, looked at him gravely, without listening to him. The Signior Matthioli remained always persuaded that it was a spy that had been placed with him, till he was one day disabused, by the Jacobin's getting down from his bed, stark naked, and setting himself to preach, without rhyme or reason, till he was tired. I and my lieutenants saw all their manœuvres through a hole over the door."*

It appears to have been very entertaining to St. Mars and his lieutenants, to witness the ravings of these two unhappy maniacs; and there are probably many gaolers who would experience the same feelings upon a similar occasion: what cannot, however, but strike us with horror, is the fact that there was found a minister, nay, a king, and that king one who piqued himself upon professing the Christian religion,† to sanction such a

* Appendix, 105.

† If we were to judge of the Christian religion by the manner in which it was professed by Lewis the Fourteenth,

proceeding. It is indeed most painful to think, that power should have been placed in the hands of men, who could abuse it by such needless acts of cruelty.

We have no farther particulars of the state of Matthioli's mind: but, being more than half-mad at the time he was placed with the Jacobin, who was quite so, it is probable the company of the latter increased and perpetuated his phrensy. It is even not impossible that such may have been the intention of St. Mars, as, while Matthioli continued insane, it was of course more reasonable and plau-

we should indeed have a most perverted idea of its precepts. It seems as if the pseudo-christianity of that monarch, only incited him to acts of narrow-minded bigotry and cruelty, allowing, at the same time, full latitude to every kind of licentious excess; while it debarred him from the exercise of humanity and toleration. A good measure of the nature and extent of his religious knowledge and feelings is acquired, by the anecdote respecting Fontpertuis and the Duke of Orleans. When the latter was going into Spain, Lewis objected to his taking the former with him, because he was a Jansenist; but withdrew the objection when assured by the duke that he was only an atheist!

sible to continue the extraordinary rigour of his confinement.

Nor were mental sufferings the only ones which the barbarity of Lewis and his minister obliged Matthioli to undergo. We have before seen, from the letters of Louvois to St. Mars, that the latter was desired generally to treat Matthioli with great severity; afterwards he writes to him upon the subject of his clothing, "You must make the clothes of such sort of people as he is last three or four years."* Some idea may also be formed of the kind of furniture of his dungeon, from the circumstance, mentioned by St. Mars, that, upon the removal of his prisoner from the fort of Exiles to the Island of St. Margaret in 1687, his bed had been sold, because it was so old and broken as not to be worth the carriage; and that all his furniture and linen being added to it, the sum produced by the sale was only thirteen crowns.†

* M. Roux (Fazillac), quoting from an unpublished letter of Louvois to St. Mars, dated December 14th, 1681.

† About 1*l.* 12*s.* 0*d.* Appendix, No. 126.

It may be worth remarking here that the letter of Louvois, respecting Matthioli's clothes, is a sufficient answer to the absurd stories with regard to the richness of the lace, &c. worn by the Iron Mask; and the relations from St. Mars himself of his threats to his prisoner, of even corporal punishment, no less disprove the erroneous accounts of the extraordinary respect shown to him.

In the year 1681, St. Mars was offered the government of the citadel of Pignerol, which he declined accepting, for what reasons we are not told: Lewis, who was anxious to recompense his services as a gaoler of State prisoners, then gave him the government of Exiles,* a strong fortress and pass near Susa, on the frontier of Piedmont and the Briançonnois, which was vacant by the death of the Duke de Lesdiguières; at the same time augmenting the salary attached to that situation, so as to make it equal to that of the towns in Flanders.†

* Exiles was taken from the French in 1708, by the Duke of Savoy, but restored to them by the treaty of Utrecht.

† Appendix, No. 111.

Louvois, in a letter dated May 12th, 1681, acquaints St. Mars with his appointment; and informs him that "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower" are the only ones of those under his care at Pignerol, whom the King wishes to accompany him to Exiles.* "The two prisoners in the lower part of the tower," signify, as we have before seen, Matthioli and the monk.

An additional proof indeed, if any were wanted, that Matthioli was one of the two prisoners conveyed to Exiles, is given in the following extract from a letter of Louvois, dated June 9th, 1681:—"With regard to the effects belonging to the Sieur Matthioli which are in your possession, you will have them taken to Exiles, in order to be given back to him, if ever his Majesty should order him to be set at liberty."†

It is to be remarked, that this is the last time Matthioli is mentioned by name in the correspondence between Louvois and St. Mars—in consequence, it appears, of what is said by the former in

* Appendix, No. 111. † Appendix, No. 112.

his letter before quoted of the 12th of May, where he desires a list of the names of all the prisoners then under the guard of St. Mars to be sent to him, and adds—"with regard to the two who are in the lower part of the tower, you need only designate them in that manner, without adding any thing else."* This precaution was evidently enjoined lest the list should fall into other hands, while it also shows that the necessity for concealment was still considered as strong as ever.

This is also proved by the precautions ordered to be taken during the journey of the two prisoners, lest they should be seen or spoken to by any one; and by the repeated orders for their strict confinement.—"The intention of his Majesty is, that, as soon as the room at Exiles, which you shall judge the most proper for the secure keeping of the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower, shall be in a state to receive

* Appendix, No. 111.

them, you should send them out of the citadel of Pignerol in a litter, and conduct them there under the escort of your troop."* "His Majesty expects that you will guard the two before-mentioned prisoners, with the same exactitude you have made use of hitherto."† To these instructions St. Mars returned an answer in the same strain, dated from Pignerol, as he was on the point of setting off for Exiles.—"In order that the prisoners may not be seen (at Exiles), they will not leave their chamber when they hear mass; and in order that they may be kept the more securely, one of my lieutenants will sleep above them, and there will be two sentinels night and day, who will watch the whole round of the tower, without its being possible for them and the prisoners to see and to speak to one another, or even to hear any thing of one another. They will be the soldiers of my company, who will be always the sentinels over the prisoners. There is only a confessor, about whom I

* Appendix, No. 112. † Ibid.

have my doubts; but if you do not disapprove, I will give them the curate of Exiles instead, who is a good man, and very old; whom I will forbid, on the part of his Majesty, to inquire who these prisoners are, or their names, or what they have been, or to speak of them in any way, or to receive from them by word of mouth, or by writing, either communications or notes."*

Before St. Mars removed finally to Exiles, he went there to inspect the fortress, leaving his prisoners under the guard of one of his lieutenants; which is here mentioned to show the falseness of the idea that he never quitted his mysterious prisoner. Louvois enjoined him before he left them, to arrange the guarding of his prisoners in such a manner, that no accident might happen to them during his short absence; and "that they might have no intercourse with any one, any more than they had had during the time they had been under his charge."† Subsequently Louvois de-

* Appendix, No. 115. † Appendix, No. 111.

sired him not to be more than one night at a time absent from Pignerol.*

St. Mars found certain repairs to be necessary to that part of the fortress of Exiles, which he deemed the most proper residence for "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower." He demanded money for this purpose, and Louvois returned for answer that the King accorded him a thousand crowns, on condition he kept the grant a profound secret, and gave out that the repairs he was making, were at his own expense.† This again was evidently for the purpose of concealing from the neighbourhood, that any prisoners of importance were to be removed from Pignerol to Exiles.

The repairs of the tower at Exiles first delayed the removal of St. Mars, and afterwards he was ordered to stay some time longer at Pignerol, in order to receive Catinat, who was again sent there secretly, again under the assumed name of Riche-

* Appendix, No. 117. † Appendix, No. 118.

mont, and again for the purpose of taking possession of Casale.* This time the King of France was more fortunate than he had been in 1679, as Casale was actually sold to him by the Duke of Mantua, in the autumn of this year, 1681.

Finally, it appears that St. Mars and his prisoners did not move to Exiles till late in the autumn of 1681. About this time, St. Mars apparently requested permission to see and converse with Matthioli occasionally, for Louvois writes, "this word is only to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. The King does not disapprove of your visiting from time to time the last prisoner who has been placed in your charge, after he shall have been established in his new prison, and shall have left that where he is at present confined."† It is rather curious to observe, from this document, that St. Mars was permitted to visit his prisoner at Exiles, but not while he continued at Pignerol.

* Appendix, Nos. 114, 115. † Appendix, No. 120.

The first communication of St. Mars to Louvois after his arrival at Exiles, which has been published, is dated December the 4th, 1681,* and relates to the sickness of his prisoners: and the next is a letter, dated March 11th, 1682, containing a similar detail to those already alluded to, of the precautions he took for the security and solitary confinement of his two prisoners. He begins, by intimating that he has again received a charge from Louvois to that effect, and that he continues to guard his two prisoners as severely and exactly as he has ever done, and as he did formerly "Messrs. Fouquet and Lauzun, who could not boast that they had either sent or received any news, while they were in confinement." He adds, that the two prisoners can hear the people who pass along the road at the foot of their prison, but that they cannot be heard by any one; that, in the same way, they can see the people who are on the hill opposite their windows, but cannot

* Appendix, No. 121.

themselves be seen, on account of the bars placed across their room; that there are two sentinels always watching them, and who have also orders to prevent the passengers stopping under their windows—and that his own room, being joined to the tower, and commanding a view of the sentinels, the latter are by this means always kept alert. That, in the inside of the tower, he has made a partition, which prevents the priest, who says mass, from seeing the prisoners, as well as the servants who bring their food—which is afterwards carried in to them by his lieutenant; who, together with himself, the confessor, and a physician from Pragelas, a town six leagues distant, are the only persons who speak to them; the physician only being allowed to do so in the presence of St. Mars himself. He adds, that equal precautions are taken with regard to their linen, and other necessaries.*

From this period, we hear no more of St. Mars and his prisoners in the published documents, for

* Appendix, No. 121.

above three years; his next communication to Louvois being dated Dec. 23d, 1685; in which he informs him that his prisoners are still ill, and in a course of medicine. By the expression *still* being here used, it would seem as if their malady had been of considerable duration. He continues, "they are, however, perfectly tranquil."* The mention of their present tranquillity is certainly an indication that their insanity had continued, at least at intervals.

Shortly after this, the Jacobin† died. Matthioli continued ill; and St. Mars also finding his own health failing him, he‡ became convinced that the air of Exiles was unwholesome, and petitioned in consequence for a change of government.§ Lewis upon this appointed him, in 1687, to that of the Islands of St. Margaret and St. Honorat, on the coast of Provence, near Antibes, and ordered him, as before, to take Matthioli with him.

* Appendix, No. 123.

† Roux (Fazillac).

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

As in the case of his removal to Exiles, so, upon the present occasion, St. Mars went first to look at and prepare the prison at St. Margaret, before he conveyed his prisoner there.* Previously, however, to leaving him for that purpose, he writes to Louvois, to assure him once more of the secrecy and security with which he is confined—"I have given such good orders for the guarding of my prisoner, that I can answer for his entire security; as well as for his not now, nor ever, holding any intercourse with my Lieutenant, whom I have forbidden to speak to him, which is punctually obeyed."†

He afterwards writes again to the same Minister, from the Island of St. Margaret, "I promise to conduct my prisoner here in all security, without any one's seeing or speaking to him. He shall not hear mass after he leaves Exiles, till he is lodged in the prison which is preparing for him here, to

* Appendix, Nos. 124, 125.
† Appendix, No. 124.

which a chapel is attached. I pledge my honour to you for the entire security of my prisoner."*

St. Mars accordingly returned for Matthioli, and conveyed him to his new abode, in the manner he had proposed doing, in his letter to Louvois, of January 20th, 1687—"In a chair, covered with oil-cloth, into which there would enter a sufficiency of air, without its being possible for any one to see or speak to him during the journey, not even the soldiers, whom I shall select to be near the chair."†

In spite of the expectations of St. Mars that, in this mode of conveyance, his prisoner would have air enough, it appears that he complained of the want of it, and soon fell ill in consequence. This is mentioned in a letter of St. Mars, dated May 3d, 1687, giving an account of their arrival at the Island of St. Margaret, and is the last of the correspondence between Louvois and St. Mars

* Appendix, No. 125. † Appendix, No. 124.

respecting Matthioli: "I arrived here the 30th of last month. I was only twelve days on the journey, in consequence of the illness of my prisoner, occasioned, as he said, by not having as much air as he wished. I can assure you that no one has seen him, and that the manner in which I have guarded and conducted him during all the journey, makes every body try to conjecture who my prisoner is." *

It was, probably, during this journey, that St. Mars first made use of a mask to hide the features of Matthioli.† Not as has been erroneously supposed a mask made of iron, which it will be evident, upon the slightest reflection, could not have been borne upon the face for any long continuance of time, but one of black velvet,‡ strengthened with whalebone, and fastened behind the head with a padlock, which did not prevent the

* Appendix, No. 126. † Delort.

‡ Extract of Dujonca's journal, in Mr. Craufurd's article upon "L'Homme au Masque de fer."

prisoner from eating and drinking, or impede his respiration.*

The identity of Matthioli with the prisoner known by the name of "the Iron Mask," is here very satisfactorily confirmed by circumstantial evidence. We have seen that Matthioli and the Jacobin were placed together at Pignerol; we have seen that they were designated as "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower;" we have seen that "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower" were the only ones who accompanied St. Mars when his government was transferred to Exiles; we have seen the death of the Jacobin at the latter place; and now we find St. Mars conveying a single prisoner, designated as "*the prisoner*," with him to St. Margaret, with a repetition of the same precautions and of the same secrecy as on former occasions, to which is added the celebrated Mask. Who could this prisoner be but Matthioli? It is also

* Delort.

observable, that in all the various accounts of the Iron Mask, though the dates are made to vary, he is always said to have been originally confined at Pignerol, subsequently at the Island of St. Margaret, and finally to have accompanied St. Mars to the Bastille.

The prison of Matthioli, at the Island of St. Margaret, was a room lighted by a single window to the north, pierced in a very thick wall, guarded by bars of iron, and looking upon the sea.* During his residence in this place, his valet, who, as may be remembered, had been arrested by Estrades, and who had served his master ever since his confinement, died, and was buried at midnight, and with great secrecy. To supply his place, a woman of the neighbourhood was asked if she would undertake to wait upon the prisoner. At first she consented to accept of the place, imagining

* Papon in his "Histoire générale de Provence" informs us that he went to see the room.

it might be a means of benefiting her family; but afterwards declined it, upon learning that she was to be cut off from all further intercourse with the world, and never even to see her family again.* Whether any one was eventually found to undertake the office, does not appear.

Among the erroneous anecdotes that have obtained credence with regard to the Iron Mask, there are two, or rather apparently two versions of one event, which is said to have taken place while he was at the Island of St. Margaret, but which is proved to be incorrect, by a letter published by M. Roux (Fazillac).

One version of the story states, that the mysterious prisoner wrote his name and qualities with the point of a knife upon a silver plate, and threw it out of his window; that it was picked up by a fisherman, who could not read, but brought it to St. Mars; and that the latter, having ascertained that

* "Histoire générale de Provence, du Père Papon."

the man could not read, released him.* The other version is, that the prisoner covered one of his shirts with writing, and then threw it out of window; a Monk found it, brought it to the Governor, and assured him he had not read it; but was himself found dead in his bed two days afterwards, and was supposed to have been assassinated.† The origin of these stories is evidently to be found in a letter from St. Mars to the Minister,‡ dated June 4th, 1692; in which he informs him that he has been obliged to inflict corporal punishment upon a Protestant minister, named Salves, who was a prisoner under his care, because *he would write things upon his pewter vessels, and on his linen, in order to make known*

* See "Mélanges d'Histoire et de Littérature," by Mr. Quintin Craufurd.

† See the same work of Mr. Quintin Craufurd.

‡ This must have been Lewis Francis Le Tellier, Marquis de Barbezieux, who, in the preceding year, had succeeded his father, Louvois, in the post of Secretary of State for the War department. He was an indolent but intelligent Minister.—Died in 1701, aged 33.

that he was imprisoned unjustly, on account of ov *purity of his faith.** Thus we see that this anecdote, which has been twisted into the history of the Iron Mask, had, in fact, no relation to him. And this circumstance should put us on our guard with respect to the many other marvellous stories, which have probably been pressed in the same way into the service. It is also worthy of remark that the public having determined that the Iron Mask was a great Prince, every thing was related in a manner to favour this opinion—and thus the pewter of the obscure Salves was turned, in the anecdote, into silver plate.

After eleven years' tedious confinement at the Island of St. Margaret, Matthioli accompanied St. Mars to the Bastille, to the government of which the latter was appointed, upon the death of M. de Bezemaux, which occurred in the last days of 1697.†

Before his departure from St. Margaret, St.

* Appendix, No. 127. † Delort.

the ars wrote to the Minister to request that secure lodgings might be provided for him and his prisoner during the journey; to which he received for answer, " It will be sufficient that you should lodge as conveniently and securely as you can, by means of payment."*

St. Mars accordingly set forth on his journey to the Bastille, early in the autumn of 1698, and in the course of it lodged at his own estate of Palteau, which he probably considered a securer resting-place for his prisoner than any inn could have been. An account of his visit to Palteau has been given by one of his descendants, of whose accuracy no reasonable doubt can be entertained.

It is there stated, that the masked prisoner arrived at Palteau in a litter, which preceded the

* Delort, quoting from an unpublished letter (probably from Barbezieux), dated August 4th, 1698.—It may be as well to mention here that M. Delort frequently quotes portions of letters from the French Archives, but does not publish them in his appendix. When in the course of this narrative the name of M. Delort is given as an authority, it is, for the most part, under these circumstances.

one in which St. Mars himself travelled. They were accompanied by many men on horseback, and by the peasants who had gone to meet their landlord. St. Mars always ate with his prisoner, and the latter sat with his back to the windows of the dining-room, so that the peasants, who were in the court, could not see whether he kept his mask on while at meals; but they observed that St. Mars, who sat opposite to him, had two pistols placed by the side of his plate. They were served by a single servant, who brought all the dishes from the anti-room, where they were placed, and always when he came in or went out shut the door very carefully after him. When the prisoner crossed the court, he always had his black mask over his face. The peasants also observed, that his teeth and lips were seen, that he was tall of stature, and had grey hair. St. Mars slept in a bed, which had been put up close to that of his prisoner.*

* Such is the account given by M. de Palteau, the direct descendant of St. Mars, in a letter to Freron, dated Pal-

St. Mars and Matthioli arrived at the Bastille on the 18th of September, 1698, and the former immediately went to the Minister to apprize him of their arrival.* This event is thus commemorated in the journal of M. Dujonca,† who was for many years the Lieutenant of the King, at the Bastille :—" Thursday, 18th September, 1698, at three o'clock in the afternoon, M. de St. Mars, Governor of the Bastille, arrived to take possession of his office, coming from the Islands of St.

teau, June 19th, 1768. It was published in the " Année Littéraire" for that year, and has since been republished by Mr. Craufurd, in his paper on the Iron Mask.

* Delort.

† The place of " Lieutenant de Roi," at the Bastille, was created by Lewis the Fourteenth, for M. Dujonca, who had been " Exempt" of one of the regiments of the King's Body-guards. He acquired great credit by his endeavours to procure the release of the prisoners under his care, whom, upon inquiry, he found to be unjustly detained. Some one represented to him that he would deprive himself of a great portion of his profits by thus diminishing the number of prisoners, to which he replied.—" *I can only lose my money, but these unhappy people are deprived of what is more valuable to them than even life itself.*"

Margaret and St. Honorat, bringing with him in his litter an old prisoner, whom he had under his care at Pignerol, of whom the name is not mentioned; who is always kept masked, and who was first placed, till night, in the tower of the Basiniere,* and whom I conducted afterwards myself, at nine o'clock at night, to the third chamber of the tower of the Bertaudiere;* which chamber I had taken care to furnish with all things necessary before his arrival, having received orders to that effect from M. de St. Mars. When I conducted him to the before-mentioned chamber, I was accompanied by the Sieur Rosarges,† whom M. de St. Mars also brought with him, and who is charged to wait upon and take care of the aforesaid prisoner, who is fed by the Governor."‡

* These towers are supposed to have been so called from the names of the architects who built them.

† Rosarges was made Major of the Bastille by St. Mars.

‡ Extract from the Journal of Dujonca, first published by Griffet, then by St. Foix, and subsequently by Mr. Craufurd.

Dujonca's account is confirmed by the extracts of the Register of the Bastille, published in the work entitled "La Bastille dévoilée."*

The placing of the prisoner, on his first arrival, temporarily in one part of the Bastille, and afterwards removing him by night to another, appears to have been done for the sake of greater secrecy; and we see by this, as well as by the account of his visit to Palteau, that the precautions against the possibility of discovery of his name and character were in no way diminished.

He certainly continued, from all accounts, to wear his mask from the time of his arrival at the Bastille till his death. We learn from the persons who saw him at Palteau that he was tall of stature; and an old physician, who had attended him at the Bastille when he was ill, described him (if we may credit Voltaire) as well made, of a brown complexion, and possessing an agreeable voice. He attended mass occasionally, and was forbid in his way there to speak to any one. The inva-

* Appendix, No. 128.

lids were ordered to fire upon him if he disobeyed.* He is also said to have occupied himself a good deal during his confinement with playing on the guitar.†

These are all the particulars, worthy of credit, to be collected respecting Matthioli during his confinement at the Bastille, which lasted rather more than five years. He died there after a few hours' illness, November 19th, 1703. Dujonca's journal gives the following account of his decease and interment.

"Monday, 19th November, 1703. The unknown prisoner, who was always masked with a mask of black velvet, whom M. de St. Mars brought with him, when he came from the Islands of St. Margaret, and whom he had had the care of for a long time, having found himself rather more unwell when he came out from mass, died to-day, about ten o'clock in the evening, without having had any considerable illness. M. Girault,

* Mr. Craufurd, on the authority of Linguet.

† Delort and Craufurd.

our chaplain, confessed him yesterday. Death having come suddenly on, he was not able to receive his sacraments, and our chaplain only had time to exhort him for a moment before he died. He was interred on Tuesday the 20th November, at four in the afternoon, in the church-yard of St. Paul, which is our parish. His interment cost forty livres."

This extract is confirmed in its facts by the register of the Bastille,* as well as by the register of burials of the church of St. Paul, at Paris. The former document also informs us that he was wrapped in "a winding sheet of new linen,"†—and the latter, that he was buried in the presence of Rosarges, Major of the Bastille, and of Reilh, Surgeon Major of the same prison.

In the register of the church he is designated by the name of Marchialy, and his age is entered as forty-five; assertions which are both of them evidently incorrect, and probably only made in

* Appendix, No 129. † Appendix, No. 129.

order to mislead the curious. At the time of his death, Matthioli was sixty-three years of age, as appears from the date of his birth before given. Shortly before he died, he told the Apothecary of the Bastille that he believed he was sixty years* old—a degree of inaccuracy as to his own age, which is easily to be conceived in a man who had been so long and so rigorously imprisoned. His confinement had lasted above twenty-four years.

After the decease of Matthioli, every thing was done to endeavour to destroy all trace even of his former existence. His clothes were burnt, as was all the furniture of his room; the silver plate, the copper, and the pewter, which had been used by him, were melted down; the walls of his chamber were first scraped, and then fresh white-washed; the floor was new paved; the old ceiling was taken away and renewed; the doors and windows were burnt; and every corner was searched in which it

* Delort.

was thought any paper, linen, or other memorial of him might be concealed.*

Thus were continued, to the very last, the same extraordinary precautions against discovery, which marked the whole imprisonment of the mysterious prisoner: a circumstance, which of itself certainly affords a strong confirmation of the fact, that the *Iron Mask of the Bastille*, was one and the same person with the *Count Matthioli*, who had been so secretly introduced into Pignerol, and so mysteriously conveyed from place to place by St. Mars. But the actual proof of this is only to be found in the documents which form the groundwork of the preceding narrative; and which, undoubtedly, do present a most convincing and satisfactory chain of evidence upon the subject.

An important corroboration of this evidence is also derived from the well-attested fact, that Lewis the Fifteenth, who is allowed, on all hands, to have

* Mr. Craufurd, on the authority of M. Delaunay, Governor of the Bastille. Also Register of the Bastille; for which see Appendix, No. 129.

known the history of the Iron Mask, affirmed, more than once, that *he was the minister of an Italian sovereign.* He told the Duke de Choiseul,* on one occasion, that he knew who the Iron Mask was; and, upon the Duke's questioning him further, would only add, *that all the conjectures hitherto made upon the subject were erroneous.*† The Duke

* Stephen Francis, Duke de Choiseul, Prime Minister under Lewis the Fifteenth, for above twelve years. A man of some talent, but an unskilful and extravagant minister; in spite of which, on his disgrace, (through the means of Madame du Barri, in 1770) he was turned into a martyr, by the influence of the ladies of the court, who were angry with the King for choosing his mistresses from the lower orders, instead of among them. To do him honour snuff-boxes were made, bearing the head of Sully on one side, and that of the Duke de Choiseul on the other. One of them being shown to *Sophie Arnoud,* the actress, celebrated for her repartees, she looked at the two sides, and said, "*C'est la recette—et la dépense.*"

† This first answer of the King ought not to be entirely overlooked; as, it will be remembered that, at the time it was made, the minister of the Duke of Mantua had not been mentioned by any one as the Iron Mask. He was first suggested to have been that prisoner, by the Baron de Heiss, in a letter to the authors of the "Journal Encyclopédique,"

then begged Madame de Pompadour* to ask the King who it was; she did so, and his reply was, "*The minister of an Italian prince!*"† The Duke

dated Phalsbourg, June 28th, 1770; in which he grounded his opinion upon a letter, published in a work entitled "L'Histoire Abregée de l'Europe;" published at Leyden in 1687; giving a detailed account of the arrest, by French agents, of a secretary of the Duke of Mantua.‡ M. Dutens, in his "Correspondence Interceptée," published in 1789, held the same opinion, grounded upon the same authority. He afterwards repeated the same opinion in his "Mémoires d'un Voyageur, qui se repose." Finally, M. Roux, (Fazillac) in 1801, published his work upon the Iron Mask; in which he supported the same opinion; and attached to the Secretary the name of Matthioli.

* Jane Antoinette Poisson, married to a financier named Le Normand d'Etioles; created Marquise de Pompadour by Lewis the Fifteenth, of whom she was first the mistress, and afterwards the minister of the disgraceful debauches. At her death, in 1765, the King showed no signs of grief; and on seeing her funeral go by his windows on a rainy day, his only remark was, "La Marquise aura aujourdhui un mauvais temps pour son voyage!"

† Appendix, No. 131.

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‡ See Appendix, No. 133.

de Choiseul, unsatisfied by this reply, which he considered to be only an evasion, took another opportunity of again applying to the King upon the subject, who again answered, "*He believed that the prisoner was a minister of one of the courts of Italy!*"*

Thus has the ill-fated Matthioli been identified with the Iron Mask, and traced through his long and dreary prison to his grave. It is probable that much of the illusion and interest, which accompanied the mysterious appellation of *the Iron Mask,* will be destroyed by the certainty of who he really was; as well as by the comparative insignificance of the personage who has successfully laid claim to the title. Still it is surely satisfactory that truth, after being so long overwhelmed by error, should be at length triumphant.

* Appendix, Nos. 131, 132. Madame Campan mentions having heard Lewis the Sixteenth tell his wife, that the Count de Maurepas (who, both from his age and situation, was very likely to know the truth,) had informed him that the *Iron Mask* was "a prisoner dangerous from his intriguing disposition, and a subject of the Duke of Mantua."

The lovers of romance, who still wish to know more of the magnificent conjectures of former days; or who desire to be made acquainted with the reasons that induced a belief, that the Iron Mask was either the Duke de Beaufort; or the Count de Vermandois; or the Duke of Monmouth; or an elder or a twin-brother of Lewis the Fourteenth; or a son of Oliver Cromwell; or Arwediks, the Armenian Patriarch; are referred to Voltaire, Dutens, St. Foix, La Grange Chancel, Gibbon, the Père Papon, the Père Griffet, the Chevalier de Taulés, and Mr. Quintin Craufurd. Of these accounts, perhaps Voltaire's is the least curious, and Mr. Craufurd's the most so; because the first did not seek for truth, but only wished to invent a moving tale; while the latter was most anxious to arrive at the truth, and had all the advantage in his researches of the former writers upon the same subject.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

ESTRADES TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Commencement of the Negociation.—State of the Court of Mantua.—Influence of the Spaniards there.

Venice, Dec. 18th, 1677.

SIRE,

As the grief I felt at having displeased your Majesty was extreme, so my joy is not less to learn from M. de Pomponne, that your Majesty has had the goodness to pardon me my too great facility; and that you have been graciously pleased to listen to the reasons, which I took the liberty to offer to you, in justification of the innocence of my intentions; however, Sire, this misfortune will

oblige me, in future, to act in all things with so great a circumspection, that your Majesty will, I hope, never have cause to be dissatisfied with my conduct.

I have thus far deferred informing your Majesty of a project, which my anxiety for your service has suggested to me, because the success of it appeared so difficult that I did not venture to propose it, till I saw some chance of being able to accomplish it; but, as the affair is at present in a favourable state, I can almost assure your Majesty, that the conclusion of it will depend upon yourself. I shall now give you an exact account of it, in order that I may receive the orders it shall please you to send me; which I will take care to execute punctually. About four months ago, having become more particularly acquainted with the divisions at the Court at Mantua than before was the case, and having heard that the Duke of Mantua was not so abandoned to his pleasures, but that he still had some ambition, and much chagrin at the state to which he was reduced by his mother, and his suspicions of the Spaniards; I hoped that it would not be impossible to detach him entirely from them, to induce him to enter

into the views of your Majesty, and to persuade him really to treat respecting Casale. I have thought that I could not employ any one in this affair more proper to conduct it, than a certain Count Matthioli, who is entirely devoted to that prince; I had already known him for some time, and he had testified a great desire of rendering himself agreeable to your Majesty by some service. I knew that he had been Secretary of State to the late Duke of Mantua, that the present one had preserved much affection for him, and that he was well-informed of the different interests of the Princes of Italy; but as he had been much in the Milanese, and had had a good deal of access to the Spanish ministers, I would not put any confidence in him, till I had first tried him. I therefore charged the individual, named Giuliani, to whom your Majesty had the goodness to make six months ago a gratification, and who has a zeal for your service which prevents my having any doubt of his fidelity, to observe Matthioli attentively and secretly; and after I had been sufficiently informed that he was much discontented with the Spaniards, who had always amused him with hopes, and afterwards abandoned him, I sent Giuliani, in the month

of last October, to Verona, where he went under pretext of his private affairs; but in fact, to put Matthioli, who was there, upon the subject of the Duke of Mantua, according to the instruction I had given him, and to represent to him that those who had an attachment for their prince, could not but be much afflicted to see him, at his age, still under the guidance of his mother; without money, without authority, always in a state of suspicion against those who are habitually about him; and what is worse, in so insensible a state, that he only thought of passing his life with actresses and women of the town; which had made him lose the esteem of every body, and the consideration which his rank ought to have given him: that so strange a way of life, as well as the opinion that was prevalent that he would never have children by his wife, though she was as young as himself, induced the Spaniards to foment the divisions that existed in this Court, in order to profit by them, and to try and obtain possession of Casale and of all the Montferrat: that the said Giuliani had heard me say, that I was well informed that the Empress Eleanor had already declared her pretensions to put herself in possession of that part of

the territories of Mantua; that the king of Spain supported strongly those of a Spanish nobleman, who, in virtue of his marriage with the niece of the Duke of Guastalla, by whom he has children, maintains that he is the sole heir of that duke, to the prejudice of the Duke of Mantua, who has married his daughter, and who is besides his nearest relation; that, on the other hand, the absolute control over all the territories of this prince, and all the revenues, were in the hands of his mother and of the monk Bulgarini; that, of all those who serve him as ministers, some are gained by the Spaniards, others by the Empress Eleanor, and the rest by the Duke of Guastalla; that his mother has also a part of them on her side, but that these are the smallest number, and in short, that it is a sort of miracle that he has not been already deprived of his territories, but that he runs the risk of it every day, and that the misfortune may happen to him when he is the least prepared for it; that he has no choice of the means to be made use of to guarantee himself against it, but that it is the protection of your Majesty which is alone able to give him complete security. Matthioli replied to him, that

all he had been saying to him was quite true, and that he had long, with grief, seen the truth of it; but that there was still a remedy for so great an evil; that he was sufficiently acquainted with the Duke of Mantua to know that he had more talent and ambition than he was thought to have; that, if I approved of it, he would discover his real sentiments, and that he would charge himself with whatever negociation I wished. That, meanwhile, he would go to ———*, in order to be nearer to Mantua, where he could not go without making himself suspected by the different parties who governed there, and that there he would wait till I made known to him my intentions. Some days afterwards, he sent me word that he had found means to have a secret interview with the Duke of Mantua; and that he wished me, in order that we might act in concert, to send him Giuliani, whom I have always made use of in the different journeys that were to be made, because his employment of sending the news through the different parts of Italy, gave him occasion to go from one town to another, and

* The name of the place is not stated in the letter.

prevented any suspicion of him, as there would have infallibly been, if I had sent any one of my household. I despatched him, therefore, with a new instruction, and not only had he an audience of the Duke of Mantua, to whom he spoke as I had desired him, but this prince even approved very much of the proposition that was made him, to deliver him from the continual inquietudes caused him by the Spaniards, and that, for this purpose, Casale should be put into your Majesty's hands, with the understanding that I should try to obtain from you in his favour all that he could reasonably ask for. Finally, he declared that his resolution was taken upon this subject, but, that things might be better adjusted, he wished to communicate it to two of his counsellors, in whom he had the most confidence, and that he gave the selection of them to Matthioli, in order that he might be quite secure of them. Matthioli named the Marquis Cavriani and Joseph Varano, in whom he has confidence. Meanwhile the Duke of Mantua sent Giuliani to me, to acquaint me with what had passed, and recommended him to return as soon as possible, in order to receive the draft of the plan, which would then be pre-

pared—and to convey it to me. I was much pleased, Sire, to see the affair in so good a train. I sent Giuliani back quickly, and ordered him to tell the Duke of Mantua that I entreated him to allow me to have a conference with him; that your Majesty had not as yet any knowledge of the proposed treaty, because I could not venture to go so far as that, without being certain first that he would not disavow me in what I should have the honour of writing to your Majesty, and also that he would have sufficient power to execute what had been arranged.

Giuliani returned here yesterday, bringing me as favourable answers as I could possibly desire. He told me that the two counsellors of the Duke of Mantua had, with every sort of precaution, commenced their negociation with Matthioli; that they had approved of the resolution of their master, and that they had put down in the schedule, with which they had charged him, and which I join to this letter, what the Duke requests your Majesty to grant to him; that afterwards the Duke of Mantua called him to him; that he ordered him to beg me to assure your Majesty of his respect and of his attachment to your inter-

ests, and to acquaint me that he had entirely put himself into the hands of the Count Matthioli; that he would soon go to Venice, where we might see one another conveniently and without being observed, on account of the Carnival, during which, all the world, even the Doge, and the oldest senators, go about in mask; that he wished me not to lose any time in acquainting your Majesty with this affair, because he feared some surprise from the Spaniards; but that if I wished him to keep his word with me, I must not, on any account, communicate the project to the Cardinal d'Estrées, because there was so strong a report in Italy, that he had your Majesty's orders to negociate with the Princes there, of which the Spaniards had so great a jealousy, that, upon the least suspicion they should have of him (the Duke) they would ruin him before he could receive assistance from your Majesty, who would, at the same time, lose all hope of getting possession of Casale; that he would take measures to tranquillize them, and to prevent their having any suspicions of his conduct; and that if the Cardinal d'Estrées made him any propositions, he would only receive them in full council, and give general answers, which would

not render him suspected by any body. I thus find myself precluded from the confidence which I intended to make of this business to the Cardinal d'Estrées, who I believe will soon be here, and am obliged to keep the secret scrupulously, till I have received the orders of your Majesty. The Duke of Mantua also offers to raise a regiment, provided it be at your Majesty's expense, and he represents, that by recruiting at Mantua and Casale he shall do much injury to the Spaniards, who are raising troops there daily; that Joseph Varano, who is one of the two before-mentioned counsellors, promises to get a good many soldiers from the Ferrarese, where he possesses interest, being Lord of Camerigo. He also implores your Majesty to make an effort to send a sufficiently strong army into Italy, to be able to undertake something considerable; and he assures me, that, in this case, he will not content himself with having delivered Casale into the hands of your Majesty, but will obtain for your Majesty other great advantages, through the means of his intimate connexions with the other states of Italy; that the Duchy of Milan was never so feeble, nor so devoid of all means of defence, as at present; but

that, in order to obtain more particular intelligence upon this head, he has given orders to Matthioli to go to Milan, to observe every thing there with attention, and especially to discover the intention of the Genoese, with regard to the report which has now been for some time afloat in Italy, that your Majesty intends sending an army there next Spring, at the latest. As some accident might happen to the packets, I have not ventured to put into mine the letter that the Count Matthioli, who has certainly served your Majesty well upon this occasion, does himself the honour to write to you, but have had it turned into cypher, as well as the memoir of the demands of the Duke of Mantua; and I keep the originals, together with the plan of Casale, which I do not send to your Majesty, for the same reason. I can assure your Majesty that I have never told either Giuliani or Matthioli that you intend to march troops towards the Milanese; but the latter speaks of it in his letter, because he has taken for granted the report which was purposely spread abroad in order to lead the Duke of Mantua to the determination I wished him to take; knowing that he desired to be generalissimo above all things, or rather that

it was the only thing he was very anxious for, in order to be considered in Italy like the late Duke of Modena, and like the late Duke of Mantua, who at his age commanded in chief the Emperor's army, with the title of Vicar-general of the Empire. When this Prince is here, there will only be at the conference we are to hold together, himself, Matthioli, (whom he has promised to re-establish in his post of Secretary of State, and to appoint his first minister as soon as he shall see himself restored to his authority, and that the treaty he intends making with your Majesty shall have been executed,) the Sieur Giuliani, the Sieur de Pinchesne, (who is secretary of the embassy, and of whom M. de Pomponne, who placed him with me, can answer to your Majesty for the fidelity and secrecy,) and myself. So the secrecy, so necessary in this affair, will certainly remain impenetrable.

I have the honour to be, &c.

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

* From the Arcnives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 2.

MATTHIOLI TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Protestations of devotion to Lewis.—Belief in the good intentions of the Duke of Mantua.

December 14th, 1677.

SIRE,

I take the liberty of bearing testimony to your Majesty, that among the great Ministers, whom, in your supreme wisdom, you have sent at different times into Italy, your ambassador at Venice, the Abbé d'Estrades, ought to be distinguished for his skill and his zeal to seize every occasion, which may seem to offer him the improvement or the aggrandizement of your territories.

This Ambassador having confided to me, that, in order to succeed in the enterprize that you meditate against the territories of Milan, it would be necessary to detach the Duke of Mantua from the Austrian party, and to draw him into that of your Majesty, I am anxious to contribute every thing in my feeble power for the success of this object. Your Majesty will be made acquainted with all that has passed by the despatches of the Ambassador. For myself, I bless the destiny,

which procures me the honour of serving so great a monarch, whom I regard and revere as a demi-god.

I will transmit to your Majesty all that I shall learn respecting Casale, which has been fortified by one of the most skilful engineers of the Milanese. This engineer has promised us a plan of all the fortresses of that State, and even, if your Majesty commands him, he will separate himself from the service of Spain, who does not know how to recompense properly the services and the talents of those who serve her with fidelity. I am convinced it would be useless in me to enlarge upon the importance of the fortress of Casale. Your Majesty must remember, that at different times it has arrested the progress of many armies, and that it is the only bulwark, upon which depends the loss or the preservation to the Spaniards of the territories of Milan; territories, which for more reasons than one, ought to belong to your Majesty's crown.

It is known that the Austrians are at this moment arming, in order to obtain possession by surprize of Casale, to the prejudice of the Duke Ferdinand, my master, the lawful possessor of it.

This Prince, nephew of Charles* the first, (which latter Prince was rather French than Italian, and by whose intervention the fortress of Pignerol has remained in the possession of your royal house); this Prince, I say, Ferdinand, will make known, in fit time and place, that he has not degenerated from his ancestors; he has promised to serve you with the greatest fidelity, and to fight for you in a manner worthy of his birth; and as he is extremely anxious to acquire glory, I trust your Majesty will have reason to applaud his conduct in your armies. By the confession of even the most skilful political observers, he is free from the suspicions, which may fall upon the other Italian Sovereigns. The Abbé d'Estrades knows that his Highness has communications with other great personages, who complain with reason of the insupportable yoke of the Spaniards, and who will take arms with him to combat, and to

* Charles the first, Duke de Nevers in France, succeeded to the sovereignty of Mantua on the death of his cousin Duke Vincent II. His two sons, Charles Duke de Rhetelois, and Ferdinand Duke de Mayenne, died during his life-time, and he was consequently succeeded, at his death in 1637, by his grandson Charles III.

drive as quickly as possible from Italy, a power which is only established there to oppress it. If destiny willed it so, I have no doubt that the other Princes of this country would be happy to enjoy a stable peace under the auspices of your Majesty. I offer up vows for the progress of your victorious arms, and I pray God to prolong your days for the consolation of the world, &c.

HERCULES A. MATTHIOLI.*

No. 3.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Continuation of the Negociation.—Intrigues of the Austrian Party.

Venice, Dec. 24, 1677.

SIR,

I have only some few particulars to add to the letter, which I did myself the honour to write to

* This letter exists in cypher, and also written in Italian and French, in the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs at Paris.

the King last week; but as the Duke of Mantua has made known to me, that they may serve to make you still more aware how important it is to that Prince to take his measures secretly, and to use all possible diligence for the conclusion of the affair, which I have given an account of to his Majesty, I have thought it necessary, Sir, that you should be informed of them. Three days ago, the Duke of Mantua informed me that he had found means to procure a copy of the written orders that the Empress Eleanor and the Emperor, conjointly with the Spaniards, had given to the Count Viltaliano Borromei, a Milanese, and the Imperial Commissary. They are to this effect, that if the French should come into Italy, and that it should appear to him that the Duke of Mantua had any intention to be on their side, he should make use of this pretext to render himself master of Casale without delay, by means of their partizans, who are there in considerable numbers, and among others, the Governor of the town, and the Governor of the citadel; in order to preserve this fortress and all the Montferrat for the Empress Eleanor. The Marquis Carrossa has received a similar order with regard to Mantua.

He is also an Imperial Commissary, and it will be easy for him to execute what is ordered him, because the Governor of the citadel is his brother-in-law, and the Major of the town his intimate friend. On these accounts, the Duke of Mantua has sent me word that in his present situation, in which he is besides watched by his mother, by the monk Bulgarini, who governs her, and by the greater part of his Ministers, who are devoted to the House of Austria, he is obliged to show no ambition, to appear to have no knowledge of his own affairs, and to excite no suspicions by his conduct; and also that he cannot declare himself openly in favour of the King's interests, as he would wish to do, nor deliver up Casale to his Majesty, unless he will send a sufficient army into Italy to secure that fortress, and to defend him (the Duke) from the evils that menace him, and from the designs which the House of Austria has against him; and that this obliges him to supplicate and exhort his Majesty to make an effort to that effect, even if he has not actually resolved to carry the war into the Milanese, since Casale is an acquisition sufficiently important to determine him to it. But Matthiol to whom the

Duke of Mantua has given up the entire conduct of this affair, goes still farther, and is confident, that even in this case means could be easily found to place a Governor in the citadel of Mantua, and a Major in the town, who should be as much attached to the service of the King, as those who at present occupy these two posts are to the House of Austria.

We must, besides, Sir, consider that the Duke of Guastalla, being the nearest relation of the Duke of Mantua, as well as his heir, there would be danger that, if the Duchess his daughter, who is very ill, and has no children, should die, some misfortune might happen to the Duke of Mantua, which would assure his territories to the Spanish nobleman, who has married the second daughter of the Duke of Guastalla, and whose marriage the Spaniards, doubtless with this view, made up at Vienna, by means of Don Vincent, who returned from thence some time back. You know much better than I do, Sir, of what consequence it would be to the King, not only to take away the Mantuan and the Montferrat from the House of Austria, who will never lose an opportunity of making use of them when they have once ob-

tained them, but besides to have in his own hands these two states, by means of which his Majesty can easily bridle the Princes of Italy. Therefore, I do not take the liberty of entering farther upon this matter, or of mingling my reflections with those you may choose to make upon it.

* * * * * * * *

I am, &c.

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

No. 4.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Intrigues of the Spaniards to form a league in Italy against France.

Venice, January 1st, 1678.

SIR,

I have so little news to send you from hence to-day, that I shall very soon have told you all I know, and may hope not to fatigue you with the length of this letter.

I know that a Senator, who is one of the Pre-

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

gadi, has said, that the Emperor and the Spaniards are ardently soliciting the Nuncios and the Ambassadors from Venice, residing at Madrid and Vienna, to persuade their masters to unite with them against France, and to represent to them that they have a common interest to preserve Italy, and to keep out of it the armies of the King, with which it is menaced. I do not believe that the Pope * will be much disposed to do them this pleasure; and, Sir, I could almost venture to assure you, that, if the republic should renounce the advantages of that neutrality, which she has thus far so exactly observed, it will not be for the purpose of partaking in the disgraces of the House of Austria; and indeed it is in this sense that the before-mentioned Senator talked upon the subject. * * * * *

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

* Benedict Odescalchi, son of a Milanese banker, elected Pope, September 21st, 1676, and took the name of Innocent XI. He was a good Pope, a virtuous man, and a decided enemy to *Nepotism*, against which he published a bull. He died August 12th, 1689, and his memory was venerated as that of a saint by his subjects.

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 5.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

Saint Germain, January 5th, 1678.

SIR,

Not having yet had time to render an account to the King of your despatch of the 18th of last month, I cannot inform you of the sentiments of his Majesty as to what you acquaint him with respecting the dispositions of the Duke of Mantua, I will, however, do so by the next post.

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POMPONNE.*

No. 6.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

The King's approval of the Negociation.

Saint Germain, January 12th, 1678.

SIR,

You will see by the letter of the King which goes herewith, how much his Majesty approves of

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

the negociation, which you have entered into with the Duke of Mantua, for an affair undoubtedly very important at all times, but especially so at this conjuncture: you could not also have conducted yourself in it with greater prudence, or greater secrecy than you have done.

I am very happy to see that you have taken advantage of this occasion, to testify your zeal for the service of his Majesty; and I hope that the success of the affair may assist you in procuring the sooner from his Majesty, the favour that you have asked of him.

We have not, at present, any news to send you from these parts; the King's heavy baggage set off Monday morning, for St. Quentin, as I sent you word; but his Majesty has not, as yet, made any preparation to follow it.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 7.

LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH TO ESTRADES.

Approval of the Negociation.—Answer to the demands of the Duke of Mantua.

St. Germain, January 12th, 1678.

ABBÉ D'ESTRADES,

I have seen with pleasure, by your letter of the 18th of last month, the pains you have taken, as well to draw the Duke of Mantua from the lethargy of debauchery in which he is sunk, as to excite him to throw off the yoke of the Archduchess, his mother, and of the Monk Bulgarini; who, without leaving him any part in the government of his territories, add every day to the shackles and the dependance, by means of which they have subjected him to the House of Austria. I take so much the greater interest in the more noble resolutions he seems disposed to take, on account of his belonging to a family, which was so long settled in France, and to which the King, my father, gave such great proofs of his friendship and protection. I should, therefore,

wish you to let him know, by the same channels as those you made use of to commence this negociation, that I have learned, with much satisfaction, the favourable dispositions he has manifested for my interests, and for taking himself a part more worthy of his fame and his birth; that on these accounts, I receive with pleasure the propositions he has made you of attaching himself to me by a union of measures, and by admitting my troops into Casale, upon the same terms as those by which they formerly, for so long a time, held possession of the place. Experience ought to have taught him, that the authority of his father was never more firmly established in the Montferrat, than when that fortress and those territories were supported by my protection; and the affection for the French name, which has still remained among the people, is a sufficient testimony of the advantage and kindness they received from them.

In rendering an answer to the articles that he has communicated to you, I shall commence by replying to the first; that, with regard to the offer of delivering up to me the citadel and fortress of Casale, I shall willingly content myself with holding them in the same manner in which I held them

formerly; that is to say, under the condition of preserving them for the Duke of Mantua, and of paying the garrisons I shall keep there. I would also, in order to favour the warlike inclinations of this Prince, take measures with him respecting the command of the armies I shall send across the Alps. But he must be aware, that I cannot at all enter into any consideration of the article, in which he demands, that I should get restored to him the parts of the Montferrat, which have been ceded to the Duke of Savoy. These cessions have been recognized by so many treaties, in which I have been a principal party, that I cannot do any thing that would invalidate them; all that I could possibly do, would be to employ myself, as I have several times done, to accommodate the differences which still exist between them, with regard to the valuation of those same portions of territory, and the sums that ought to be paid for them by the Duke of Savoy.

It is a different case with regard to the losses which the Duke of Mantua might sustain in the war he may possibly be engaged in together with me. I would willingly bind myself not to make peace, unless compensation was made to him; and

I would equally enter, with pleasure, into an agreement to share with him any conquests my arms might make in the Milanese.

As for his demand, that I should now make him a present of a hundred thousand Pistoles, simply as a gift, you must make him understand that this sum is too large, but that I should be ready to agree to a more moderate one, according to the engagements he is willing to enter into with me; and without explaining yourself as to what the sum should be, you will make him first state what he expects, and oblige him to keep within reasonable bounds.

You will still continue to entertain the opinion that I intend sending a considerable army this year into Italy, and you will keep principally in view in your negociation, the having it in such a state as to be able to prolong it without the danger of being obliged to break it off; since it is for the good of my service to continue it always in such a manner, that I may be the master to conduct it as I please, either by enlarging or narrowing the conditions. It is on this account, that as the Count Matthioli has thus far been the principal confidant of this affair, and that

he must be the most powerful instrument of it, it is necessary that you should keep him always in good humour, by the assurance of the especial good-will I bear him for his conduct, and by the hope of the marks of it I shall be inclined to give him. This is what I wish you to say in addition to the letter which I send you for him, in answer to the one he wrote to me.

I am, &c.

LEWIS.*

No. 8.

LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH TO MATTHIOLI.

January 12th, 1678.

COUNT MATTHIOLI,

I have seen by the letter you wrote me, as well as by what my Ambassador, the Abbé d'Estrades, communicated to me, the affection that you show for my interests. You cannot doubt but that I am much obliged to you for it, and that I shall

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

have much pleasure in giving you proofs of my satisfaction upon every occasion. Referring you, therefore, for farther particulars, to what will be said to you from me by the Abbé d'Estrades, I shall not lengthen this letter more than to add, that I pray God to have you, Count Matthioli, in his holy keeping.

LEWIS.*

No. 9.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Venice, January 29th, 1678.

SIR,

I have nothing to add to what I did myself the honour to write to the King, upon the present state of the affair, which I am treating of with the Duke of Mantua. It goes on so rapidly, that I am reduced to be sorry that I cannot find any difficulties, which, without rendering the eventual success of it doubtful, might prolong the negocia-

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

tions as long as the King seems to wish; but I have the greatest difficulty to encourage the Duke of Mantua, under the fear he is in of the Spaniards, which, to say the truth, is pretty well founded: nor can he think himself in security, unless he sees himself supported by all the protection the King can give. Nevertheless, I will take care that this Prince does not escape us, even if the affair should not be as quickly concluded as he desires. I return you a thousand most humble thanks, Sir, for all the kindness you show me on this occasion; and I can assure you, that I shall be much more anxious for the success of this affair, from my pleasure at having made known to the King by it the zeal I have for his service, and having rendered myself worthy of the favour you have done me, in procuring for me the situation I at present hold, than from any hope of thereby bettering my fortune.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 10.

ESTRADES TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Conference with Matthioli—Discussion of the demands of the Duke of Mantua.

Venice, January 29th, 1678.

SIRE,

At the time that I received the letter which your Majesty did me the honour to write to me on the 12th of this month, having learned that the Count Matthioli was arrived at Venice, I sent to him to say that I desired to have a conference with him, in consequence of which he came to my house with the usual precautions. I first delivered into his hands the letter with which your Majesty had charged me for him, which he received with all possible marks of respect and gratitude; and I told him, as your Majesty had commanded me, that you would not content yourself with testifying with your own hand the satisfaction you feel at the zeal he has shown for your interests, but that you also ordered me expressly to assure him, that you were anxious to give him other

marks of it. I added to this, that he ought to think himself happy to have found an occasion of meriting the kindness and favours of your Majesty, which he could easily do through the means of the implicit confidence placed in him by the Duke of Mantua, to whom he would also have the satisfaction, at the same time, of rendering the greatest service in his power. He answered me in a manner that does not permit me to doubt his being as grateful as it is possible to be for your Majesty's goodness, and his having a very strong wish to serve you. Afterwards I read to him the obliging expressions your Majesty makes use of to mark your affection for the Duke of Mantua, and those other parts of your Majesty's despatch, which I thought myself authorized to communicate, that he might know that you had learned with pleasure the proposals of that Prince, and that he might be aware of the considerable advantages, which would be derived from the strict alliance he (the Duke) would enter into with your Majesty by means of Casale, which you were willing to hold possession of on the same terms as formerly; that is to say, paying the garrison you should keep up in the place, and preserving it for

the Duke of Mantua. We afterwards came to talk upon his differences with the Duke of Savoy, for the restitution claimed by him of the parts of the Montferrat, which have been ceded to the latter; and it was not till after some slight disputing, that I made the Count Matthioli agree, by means of the same reasons you did me the honour to detail to me, that *you* could not enter into this affair in any other way, than by employing yourself to accommodate it; but that the intercession of your Majesty was sufficiently powerful to obtain a satisfactory result for the Duke of Mantua.

The Count Matthioli at length contented himself upon this point, but he had more difficulty to give way upon the demand of the present of one hundred thousand pistoles. He was the more obstinate in not taking off any thing from this sum, because he said that it was to be made use of for the interests of your Majesty; and that the Duke of Mantua having taken possession of Guastalla,* without giving notice to the Spaniards, he had

* On the occasion of the death of Ferdinand III. Duke of Guastalla, which occurred January 11th, 1678. The Duke of Mantua had married his eldest daughter.

judged it necessary to be upon his guard against the umbrage they might take at this measure; that for this purpose he had placed in Guastalla and in Casale the troops he had raised, and whom he was obliged to pay; that he had sent into the latter town great stores of corn and forage, and that he could not support this expense in the state to which he was reduced by his mother, who disposed entirely of his revenues. I answered him, that the sum of money, which the Duke of Mantua requested your Majesty to give him at present, was not necessary to him for the expenses which he alleged; that the augmentation of the garrison of Casale, and the provisions sent into it, were regarded by the Spaniards themselves as precautions that he wisely took against the enterprizes of France, at a time when it was no longer doubted that the latter power intended to carry the war into Italy; and that therefore neither the partizans of the Spanish faction who are about him, nor his mother, could refuse him the money he wanted for that purpose; that I knew that his subjects would contribute with pleasure, and that they had shown the greatest joy at their Sovereign's applying himself to his own affairs;

that till the conclusion of the treaty, which was to unite him so firmly with your Majesty, he would have no occasion for any new expenses, and that he would then receive all the assistance and succour which he could expect from your Majesty; that your Majesty, by engaging yourself to pay and keep up the garrisons in Casale, ceded to the Duke the entire enjoyment of the property and revenues without any deduction, and that your Majesty would have no farther advantage in this affair, than that of delivering him from the yoke which the House of Austria had imposed upon him; and of facilitating the conquests in the Milanese, of which you were to give him a share; so that the present which he asked for, being to be considered purely in the light of a gratification, a hundred thousand pistoles was a demand so excessive, that your Majesty had not judged it right to make any offer in consequence, and that you had only ordered me to tell him, that you would have no objection to make a present to the Duke of a more moderate sum; that therefore it was necessary for him to explain himself clearly upon the subject.

The Count Matthioli for some time refused to say any thing, taking a line which was in appear-

ance very civil, which was, that he threw himself upon the generosity of your Majesty. But seeing that I continued to desire him to speak, he reduced the sum by little and little to five hundred thousand livres. I told him, that I guessed pretty well what the Duke of Mantua might hope for from your Majesty, and that I could not charge myself to lay *this proposal* before you, and that I also could not help telling him, that for a man who professed to be so well intentioned, he appeared to me very unyielding upon a point of small moment, in a negociation from which he would allow, without doubt, that the Duke of Mantua would derive great and solid advantages. Finally, Sire, I brought him to content himself with one hundred thousand crowns, and that on condition that your Majesty was not to pay them till after the signature of the treaty, and the exchange of the ratifications; and then, if you chose not to give the whole sum at once, that the Duke of Mantua should receive fifty thousand crowns first, and then the other fifty thousand three months afterwards. Besides this, I declared to the Count Matthioli that I could not answer for your Majesty's approving of my having fixed upon so large a

sum, but that I promised him to do all that depended on me, to prevent my being disavowed.

Not only have the other articles of your Majesty's despatch been agreed to without difficulty, but they have even served powerfully to confirm the Count Matthioli in his opinion, that the Duke of Mantua cannot take a better course than that of abandoning himself entirely to the protection of your Majesty. He has so firm a belief in the resolution he is convinced you have taken of sending a considerable army this year into Italy, that I should have no difficulty in persuading him still more strongly of it; but I am a little embarrassed with the anxiety of the Duke of Mantua to conclude this affair, which is caused to him by his continual terror of the design, which he understands the Spaniards continue to have, of seizing upon his fortresses on the least pretext, and on the first favourable occasion. Nevertheless, I will endeavour to lengthen the negociation as much as your Majesty shall find useful to your interests, as you have commanded me, and at the same time I will take care not to put it in any danger of being broken off. I implore your Majesty to be persuaded that I shall never be forgetful of any thing which may

be for the good of your service, or which may testify the zeal and the profound respect, with which I am, Sire,

Your Majesty's
most humble, most obedient, and
most faithful subject and servant,
THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

No. 11.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

The Duke of Mantua watched by the Spaniards.

Venice, February 12th, 1678.

SIR,

Though the Duke of Mantua has been for the last fortnight at Venice, I have not yet been able to see him; but he has sent me word several times by the Count Matthioli, that he had still more impatience than even I have, that we should

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

confer together; that he only deferred giving himself that satisfaction, in order that he might first get rid of those of his people whom he has the least confidence in, and particularly four men, whom his mother has sent with him here to observe all his actions, which they do with the greatest care; and that two days before he sets off to return to his own territories (where he is not afraid of any surprize, when he shall be once there himself), he will acquaint me with the time and place at which we may see one another. It is true, that the step he has taken, of at once seizing upon the territories of the late Duke of Guastalla, has very much disquieted the Spaniards; and one sees that they are endeavouring, by all sorts of means, to ascertain whether the Duke of Mantua has taken any measures to gain the support of the King. His resident at Venice, who is devoted to the Duchess his mother, came two days ago to the Sieur de Pinchesne to ask, on the part of his master, whether I was about to despatch an extraordinary courier to Paris, because his highness would be glad to make use of him to convey there a packet of consequence: he answered him, that affairs were so little of a pressing nature here, that

I always wrote by the usual conveyance, and that I had not at present any reason for sending a courier; but that, if the Duke of Mantua wished it, I would send one on his account. I made this known to the Prince himself, who was surprized that his resident, in his name, and without his order, should have made a request of that nature; and as he was of opinion, as well as myself, that the intention of his resident was by this means to discover whether a packet, which, it was said, the Duke of Mantua had received from the Grand Duchess,* was of importance, he agreed to the expedient which I proposed to him, of sending publicly to make him the same offers as those which had been made to his resident, in order that he might be able to express before his ministers his disapprobation of their entering, without his knowledge, into communications with the French ambassador, being aware of the mea-

* Margaret Louisa, daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans; married in 1661, to Cosmo III., Grand Duke of Tuscany, whom she quarrelled with, and finally left, and returned to France, where she established herself in the Abbey of Montmartre. She died at an advanced age in 1721.

sures which it was necessary for him to keep. He charged Matthioli to tell me that he had had a letter from the Grand Duchess, to which he had sent an answer, for the purpose of begging her to support his claims to the King; having heard that the Duke of Modena* had complained to his Majesty of his having taken possession of the succession of the Duke of Guastalla, to which the Duke of Modena had pretensions. The Sieur de Pinchesne went to him from me, and the thing was executed as it had been previously determined upon; but this adventure, as well as many other things which the Duke of Mantua discovers daily, convince him that the Spaniards are suspicious of him, on which account he is so uneasy, that he is more than ever anxious for your Majesty to secure him quickly against their enterprises.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

* Francis of Este, Duke of Modena, succeeded his father, Alphonso IV. in 1662. During his minority, his territories were wisely and ably governed by his mother, Laura Martinozzi, niece of Cardinal Mazarin. His only sister, Mary Beatrix, was the second wife of James II. of England. He died in 1694.

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 12.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Impatience of the Duke of Mantua to conclude the Negociation.

Venice, February 19th, 1678.

Sir,

You will have seen by the last letters I did myself the honour to write to you, that I take care to keep up the negociation I have entered into with the Duke of Mantua, and to hold it always in that state that it may be terminated in whatever way the King shall judge most according to his interests. Thus, Sir, I have only to assure you, that I shall apply myself, as you command me in your last letter of the 2d of this month, to gain time, and to confirm the Duke of Mantua in the resolution he has taken of abandoning himself to the King's protection. He is as thoroughly persuaded as one could wish, that he cannot take a better course, although the Spaniards have lately been making him large offers of money and of employment, in order to oblige him to declare

himself openly in their favour, and to allow of the introduction of a garrison of Germans into Casale; but as he is always apprehensive, lest his want of affection for the House of Austria should be discovered, he can never think himself in security till he shall be supported by a treaty; and it is this which gives him so much impatience to conclude the one he intends making with the King.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

No. 13.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Plans of the Spaniards.—Dispositions of the Venetian Government.

Venice, February 26th, 1678.

SIR,

I have not had the honour of receiving any letters from you this week. Indeed, I expected

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

that the hurry of the King's departure would prevent your writing. I have learned from good authority, that the government here have received intelligence, that the Spaniards have renewed their proposals to form a league of the Princes of Italy against France, and that it was at Rome that they concerted the means to succeed in it: this is, without doubt, what has given occasion to the report which has been current for some days, that the Cardinal Porto Carrero*, in his way to Spain, where he is going to take possession of the Archbishopric of Toledo, is to visit the different Courts of Italy, to try to engage them in the party, which they call *the common cause*. It is said, that the Grand Duke† has already made known his

* Lewis Emmanuel Ferdinand Portocarrero, second son of the Marquis of Almenara: created a Cardinal in 1669, by Clement IX.; Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain, 1677; Commander of the Order of the St. Esprit, and Bishop of Palestrina. Was also, at different periods of his life, Viceroy of Sicily, Ambassador at Rome, Lieutenant-General at sea, and twice Governor of Spain. Died at Madrid, September 14th, 1709.

† Cosmo III., Grand Duke of Tuscany, son of Ferdinand II. and Victoria Della Rovere, heiress of the Dukes of Urbino. Succeeded his father in 1670, and died in 1723, aged 81 years. He was a weak, narrow-minded, and bi-

opinion, that if they intend to unite, it ought to be for the maintenance of their liberty, and that they ought not to engage themselves in an extensive war, or to assist in enabling one of the two belligerent powers to oppress them eventually with greater ease. This intelligence has obliged me to give all my attention to penetrate the sentiments of the Venetian government upon this subject; and I have been informed, upon good authority, that thus far the determination is to deliver themselves from the importunities of the Spaniards, if they should be too pressing, by a similar reply to that which is said to have been given at Florence; but it now appears to me, that the fear and jealousy of the power of the King, which existed here formerly, is very much reviving, and they are becoming apprehensive that the designs of his Majesty are not confined to the preservation of the conquests he has already made, nor even to those he may make in Flanders. The senate is confirmed in this opinion, by the letters of M. Contarini,*

goted Prince; and was the Duke of Tuscany whose travels in England, in the reign of Charles II. have been published.

* At that time Ambassador to France, from the Republic of Venice.

who sends them word that they must not look for peace, because the King is against it. This way of talking persuades me, that M. Contarini is either ill-intentioned or ignorant—and his intelligence is very capable of augmenting the disquietudes of the senate. I have shown, as well as I was able, to those I have spoken to upon the subject, that it is impossible to act with more sincerity in favour of peace, or to facilitate more the means of procuring it, than his Majesty has done. There is, however, no probability that, in the present state of the affairs of the Republic of Venice, and under the perpetual fear she is in of the Grand Vizier,* she will dare to declare herself in favour of the enemies of the King; but, Sir, I

* The Grand Vizier, at this moment, was Achmet Coprogli, the most illustrious, perhaps, of all the ministers who have ever governed the Ottoman Empire. He inherited the eminent talents of his father, Mahomet Coprogli, whom he succeeded as Grand Vizier, in 1661; and was superior to him in humanity and generosity. His military exploits were also more considerable. In 1669, he successfully concluded the siege of Candia, which had lasted twenty-two years. He died in 1678; having for seventeen years sustained the throne, and rendered illustrious the reign of his feeble and indolent master, Mahomet IV.

can assure you, from the knowledge I have upon the subject, that at the present time, we must only reckon upon the weakness of the Venetians, and upon the poverty of their finances, and not upon their good intentions towards us. If I might be permitted to give my opinion upon the present conjuncture, I should say that there is not a more ready, or more certain way of ruining all the measures of the Spaniards in Italy, and of terminating in the King's favour the irresolutions of the Senate, than by binding the Duke of Mantua by the treaty which he is willing to make with his Majesty: not only is he always in the same resolution of concluding this affair, on account of the Emperor's having sent word to him that he does not wish to deprive him of the succession of the Duke* his father-in-law, but that he only desires him to withdraw the garrison he has placed in Guastalla: but besides, because his Imperial Majesty presses him to execute a treaty made by the late Duke, his father; which was an engagement that he should never have any but a German garrison in Casale. The Duke of Mantua shows me the greatest confidence,

* Of Guastalla.

and sends me word, by the Count Matthioli, what is deliberating on the state of affairs, in order to know my opinions before he decides any thing. You may be sure, Sir, that I omit nothing on my part to encourage his good dispositions, and to keep the negociation always in that state, that the King may be the complete master of it. The Duke of Mantua requested me, ten days ago, to come and see him ride at the academy. I went accordingly, and found that he was really very firm on horseback, though he has not a graceful seat, on account of his leg having been formerly broke, and that it is the custom here to wear the stirrups very short. As he piques himself upon being a good horseman, he was much pleased at my praises, which were repeated to him by the Count Matthioli; and at my promising to repeat them in the first letter I should have occasion to write to you.

Two of the most considerable gentlemen of this republic, whose names are, Cornaro the elder, called "of the great House," and a Foscarini, are already intriguing to succeed M. Contarini, in the embassy to France, although the choice cannot be made till the month of September: upon

whichever of the two it shall fall, he will fill the situation worthily, above all in the article of expense, as they are both very rich and very generous.

Although I took the liberty, Sir, to request, in my last letter, your protection with M. Colbert,* for the payment of my appointment, and, above all, for the payment of those of the first six months of the year 1676, for which I have long had the orders, I have not yet been able to obtain them. I am, however, forced by my pressing necessities to renew my request, and to supplicate you most humbly to procure me this favour from M. Colbert. I trust, Sir, you will be kind enough to afford me this mark of your affection, which is the greatest I can possibly receive, in the embarrassment in which I

* John Baptist Colbert, one of the most eminent men of the many who adorned and illustrated the reign of Lewis XIV. He was an able and honest financier, a great statesman, and an enlightened patron of letters and arts. The blots in his character were, his persecution of Fouquet, and his enmity to the virtuous Arnaud de Pomponne, to the disgrace of whom he largely contributed. He was made Comptroller-general of the Finances, in 1664; Secretary of State for the Marine, in 1669; and died in 1683.

at present find myself; and that you will be always persuaded that I am, with profound respect, and unalterable attachment,

Sir, &c.

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

No. 14.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

Recommendations of Delay in the Negociation.

Cambray, March 1st, 1678.

SIR,

I have rendered an account to the King, during his journey, of your despatches of the 29th of January and 5th of February. I shall not now have time enough to send you a long answer to them. I shall therefore only tell you, that his Majesty saw in them the continuation of the negociation which you have entered into with the Count Matthioli; that you had been discussing

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

the points which he proposed to you, and those which his Majesty wishes neither to grant nor to refuse; that you had even descended to the detail of the sum which had been demanded, and that you had reduced it to one hundred thousand crowns. On these subjects I have to inform you, Sir, that his Majesty approves entirely of your continuing a negociation, which may eventually be of very considerable importance; but for this it is necessary that the opportunities should be favourable, and the more so, as the basis of whatever treaty is concluded, must necessarily be the King's sending a powerful army across the Alps. You, I am sure, are sufficiently aware, that thus far events do not seem to favour such a project; it is, however, always advisable to continue to encourage the belief of it, and this is what his Majesty thinks it will be best for you to do; but he does not see the necessity for your entering into any engagement upon a point which must fail of success, and which would render useless any expense his Majesty may go to. Therefore, Sir, your best course to pursue is, to cultivate always the good intentions of the Count Matthioli, and through him those of his master; not to put an

end to the hope they have to see the arms of France in Italy; but to defer the answer they expect from you, partly upon the ground of the journey and the campaign in which his Majesty is at present engaged, which prevents his writing to you, and partly upon other reasons; but still to keep the negociation, as much as you are able, in such a state as his Majesty may be able to take advantage of, according to the conjecture of affairs. * * * * *

POMPONNE.*

No. 15.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Information respecting the Dispositions of the Venetians.

Venice, March 12th, 1678.

SIR,

The hurry which I know always prevails on a march, left me but little hope of hearing from

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

you till you arrived at Metz, and I am therefore the more obliged to you for your kindness, in writing to me on the 15th of last month from Vitry.

I have nothing certain to send you to-day; but next week I shall have the honour of sending to the King an account of the conference, which I am decidedly to have to-morrow evening with the Duke of Mantua. All the measures are taken for this purpose; and that Prince has sent me word that he will explain to me the reasons which oblige him to send the Count Matthioli, without delay, to your Majesty; he will not, however, set off for ten or twelve days, and I explained to him that it was necessary first that I should be made acquainted with the subject of his mission. I thought it necessary to obtain a knowledge of it, in order that his Majesty may be fully informed before the Count Matthioli waits upon him. I can only assure you at present, that things could not be better disposed for the formation of a powerful league in Italy, to drive the Spaniards entirely out of it, in case the King chooses to turn his arms to this side. This is what you shall be informed of more in detail, and more particularly, in my next

despatch; because I shall be able to speak to you upon the subject with certainty, after I have learned from the Count Matthioli, the success of a negociation which he has entered into lately with the Republic, in the name of the Duke of Mantua, to which I am privy. We agreed that the pretext he should make use of, was the desire of that Prince to regulate himself by the counsels of the Senate, after having communicated to them his legitimate rights to Guastalla, and the well-grounded fears he entertains from the sentiments displayed by the House of Austria towards him in this affair. M. Matthioli has already had two conferences with a sage of the *terra firma*, named Lando, a deputy of the College, and he is to have three more with him this week; which will discover to us the real dispositions of the Senate towards his Majesty. It is easy to see by the manner in which this senator has already spoken, that if a French army was to arrive in Italy, the Republic would prefer profiting by the misfortunes and weakness of the House of Austria, by joining her arms to those of the King, to remaining in a neutrality, which would appear to her dangerous, while the army of so powerful a prince was carry-

ing on war at her gates. These political views of the Venetians justify what I have already had the honour of remarking to you, that we must expect nothing from them, except what fear or interest may oblige them to. * * * * *

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

No. 16.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Fears of the Duke of Mantua.

Venice, March 19th, 1678.

SIR,

I have not had the honour of receiving any letter from you this week. You will see by the account I send to the King, what passed at the conference I had with the Duke of Mantua. I will only add to it, Sir, that, if his Majesty deems it to his advantage, that this Prince should be united with him, according to the conditions which

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

have been proposed, it appears to me that it will be necessary, before the Count Matthioli sets off for Paris, to put this affair in a situation in which it is no longer liable to be broken off; because I have seen the Duke of Mantua so alarmed at the menaces of the Spaniards, and at the protection they afford openly to the Count de Prades,* who pretends that the Duchy of Guastalla belongs to him, that I have been unable to tranquillize his fears, except by giving him the hope that the return of the Count Matthioli will deliver him from all his embarrassments; and if he was to see him return without bringing the King's consent for the conclusion of the affair, and without a certain assurance of speedy assistance, I do not know whether the fear of being stripped of his territories would not make him change his resolution.

* This is one of those mistakes into which the French are so liable to fall from their slovenly way of writing the names of foreigners. The *Count de Prades* means Emmanuel *Count d'Eparédés,* Viceroy of Valentia, a Spanish nobleman, whose daughter married Vespasian Gonzaga, only brother of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla. The sole offspring of this marriage was Maria Louisa, who, as has before been mentioned, (see note, page 9,) married Thomas de la Cerda, Marquis of Laguna.

I have thought, Sir, that I ought to inform you faithfully of the situation in which I find the mind of the Duke of Mantua, in order that you may regulate yourself accordingly.

The Senate has discovered that the Pope† has let drop, of his own accord, the affair of the adjustment between the Republic and Spain, on the occasion of what has passed at Trieste, because his Holiness wishes to be the only Mediator of the Catholic Princes at the Assembly of Nimeguen, and that the Ambassador of Venice should not divide this honour with his Nuncio. * *

I am, &c.

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.‡

† Innocent the Eleventh (Odescalchi;) see note, page 109. At this time, the conferences for the peace of Nimeguen had commenced. That peace was concluded and signed on the 10th of August of this same year.

‡ From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 17.

ESTRADES TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Account of his Interview with the Duke of Mantua.—The latter insists upon sending Matthioli to Paris.

Venice, March 19th, 1678.

SIRE,

A week ago I communicated to M. de Pomponne that I was to have a conference the next day with the Duke of Mantua. We met, as had been concerted, at midnight, in a small open place, which is at an equal distance from his house and mine. I was an entire hour with him; and not only did I tell him all that your Majesty had desired me to apprize him of, and which he had already learned from the Count Matthioli, but besides, I re-assured him, as much as I was able, upon the subject of the constant, and indeed well-grounded, alarms he is in with regard to the Spaniards. I did not explain myself to him with regard to the present your Majesty intends making to him in money, as soon as the treaty shall be concluded; but contented myself with promising

that he should have reason to be content with it. He appeared to be much satisfied with our conversation; and, on my side, I have no less reason to be so; since he has confirmed to me all that the Count Matthioli told me from him. I have given so exact an account of these things to your Majesty in the letters I have had the honour to write to yourself and to M. de Pomponne, that it is useless for me to enlarge more upon this subject. When we were upon the point of separating, the Duke of Mantua represented to me the risk he is in of being overwhelmed by the Spaniards, whose bad intentions he cannot doubt of, after their late earnest persuasions to him, to admit the Germans into Casale, to withdraw his garrison from Guastalla, and to declare himself openly and without delay in their favour. He added, that I must be aware, that under the resolution he had taken of serving your Majesty, both with his person and his territories, he would do nothing prejudicial to your interests; but that, if the Spaniards did not give him more money than what they were accustomed to furnish him with, for the support of the garrison of Casale, as they had declared to him was their intention, he should not

be able to support the expense of it himself, or to preserve that fortress; that the danger was so pressing, that no time was to be lost in placing him in a state of safety, and that affairs went on so slowly by means of despatches, that he found himself obliged to send the Count Matthioli to your Majesty, to expose to you the state to which he finds himself reduced, and to implore you to deliver him from it as quickly as may be possible.

I have not dared, Sire, to oppose myself to this journey, because I perceived that the Duke of Mantua had taken some offence, or at least that he had some uneasiness, at the length of this negociation, which I have protracted upon different pretexts as much as I was able, without endangering it, as your Majesty had ordered me; and because besides I have thought that you would be the more assured of the firmness of the Duke of Mantua, when the Count Matthioli, in whom he has a blind confidence, and who governs him absolutely, should be with you. He will make known to your Majesty, better than can be done by letters, the facilities you would find in conquering the Milanese, the intelligences that may be established there, and the detail of the whole

negociation he has had with the Republic of Venice in the name of the Duke of Mantua, who demanded the advice of the Senate upon the affair of Guastalla, and its assistance, in case it was attempted to disturb him by force in the possession of that Duchy. The Senate has sent word to Matthioli, by a sage of *terra firma*, who was deputed for this purpose, that the Duke of Mantua ought to retain possession of Guastalla; that the Republic would render him all the good offices she could, and that even if her intercession should be of no avail, she would still assist him secretly with advice and money, and not abandon him. This senator gave him to understand, that if your Majesty was to send an army into Italy, and that the Duke of Mantua should be in your interests, the Republic would not be disinclined to enter into the same party; and the Procurator Nani,*

* John Baptist Felix Gaspar Nani was descended from an illustrious family at Venice, and was born on the 30th of August, 1616. He distinguished himself early in diplomacy, and was for twenty-five years ambassador from the Republic to France. He was subsequently chosen Procurator of St. Mark, the next dignity in the Republic to that of Doge. He is best known to posterity by his "Istoria della Republica Veneta,"—which is a valuable

with whom he has also had two conversations, explained himself upon this subject still more clearly.

As the Count Matthioli is not to receive his instructions till the day after to-morrow, he will not, certainly, set off from hence till towards the end of the week. I shall have the honour of acquainting your Majesty with what they contain of most importance, as well as with the time by which the Count Matthioli can be with you.

I am,

with every kind of respect and submission,

Sire,

Your Majesty's

most humble, most obedient, and

most faithful Servant and Subject,

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

and useful work, though it has been sometimes reprobated as being partial, and written in a vicious and incorrect Italian. He died on the 25th of November, 1678.

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 18.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Reasons for consenting to the Mission of Matthioli toParis.

Venice, March 26th, 1678.

SIR,

My last letters will have shown you that I had forestalled, in some measure, the orders which I received in the one of the 4th of this month, which you did me the honour to write me. I had judged that, in the present conjuncture, it would not be easy for the King to send a powerful army into Italy, so speedily as was wished. It appeared to me, nevertheless, that his Majesty considered the negociation which I had commenced with the Duke of Mantua, through the means of the Count Matthioli, as an affair which might eventually be of use to him, and which he would wish to be in a situation to profit by. Therefore, Sir, I have used all my endeavours to encourage the opinion already entertained, that the arms of France will appear in the Milanese, and to confirm the Duke of Mantua in his good dispositions towards his

Majesty, and in his suspicions of the Spaniards. I had even made use of the same reasons, which you prescribe to me to urge in your letter, to moderate his impatience to conclude the treaty, which he is desirous of making with the King. Before his Majesty left St. Germain, I represented to the Count Matthioli that the negociations with England occupied him too much, to permit him, in such very critical times, to apply himself as much as was necessary to a new enterprize of the importance of the one that was meditated in Italy; and since that, I have alleged to him the difficulty of getting answers during the hurry of the journey, and the occupations of the campaign, which oblige the King to go frequently from one place to another. I have added, that I was by no means surprized at this, and that, in preceding years, I had rarely received any letters from you at those times. He has contented himself, thus far, with the excuses I have given him; but the Duke of Mantua is so violently alarmed at the peril in which he believes himself to be, and at the length of the negociation, that he has absolutely determined upon sending the Count Matthioli to the King—and I have not dared to oppose

myself to this, from the fear of giving him suspicions, or of disgusting him with the negociation altogether. It is true, Sir, that after having well considered the manner in which this journey could be accomplished, I have thought that it would turn out to be the most easy and the most infallible method to confirm still more the dispositions of the Duke of Mantua, and to prolong this affair as long as the King shall judge for the good of his service. I have for this purpose persuaded the Count Matthioli that it was important he should not go immediately to his Majesty, but that he should first pay a visit to some of the towns in Italy, under the pretext of his master's interests, and his disputes with the Duke of Modena respecting the Duchy of Guastalla, in order that there may be no suspicion of his going into France. He is agreed upon this point with me; and by the reckoning we have made together of his course, and the halts he will make, I can assure you, Sir, that you will not see him for these two months. It will be still easier for you, when he does arrive, to detain him at least as long; and thus the campaign will be nearly finished without the Duke of Mantua's being able to complain of the delay, or to

take measures contrary to the King's intentions. Since this Prince left Venice, he is travelling about his territories, without ever stopping more than three or four days in a place, in order to avoid giving audience to the Spanish envoys, who are waiting for him at Mantua, and to whom he has sent word that they may address themselves to his Council; that, for himself, he has no answer to give them to their propositions, because he is waiting for intelligence from Venice, by which he intends to regulate his conduct. The Count Matthioli went to him the beginning of this week, in order to receive his instructions for his journey to Paris, and to give him an account of his negociation with the Republic. He will afterwards return here to explain to the Senate his Master's sentiments; and so, Sir, I shall perhaps have a farther opportunity of deferring his departure for a still longer time. * * * *

I am, &c.

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 19.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Venice, April 2d, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I have nothing to add to what I have already had the honour of writing to you, upon the affair which regards the Duke of Mantua. I have received this morning a note from the Count Matthioli, in which he gives me intelligence that he shall be here to-morrow; and that he will come the same day to me, an hour after sunset. I will not fail to give you an account, in my next letter, of the conversation I shall have with him. I am glad that he did not return to Venice so soon as he originally intended; because his journey to Paris will be, in consequence, deferred some days longer. I will try to obtain intelligence why the Resident from Mantua has had such frequent audiences of the College for the last few days. * *

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THE ABBÉ ESTRADES.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 20.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

Approval of Matthioli's Mission to France.—Permission to Estrades to leave Venice.

April 5th, 1678.

SIR,

We are now at the end of our journey, and consequently at the end of my want of punctuality in writing to you. The being stationary at St. Germain, will make me more regular. I took an opportunity, yesterday, to give an account to his Majesty of your letters of the 5th, 12th, and 19th of last month. He appeared satisfied with the manner in which you have conducted the business with the Duke of Mantua; and was made acquainted, by your letter, written after your interview with that prince, with the resolution he had taken of sending the Count Matthioli to France. You will have already seen by my despatches, that there is little probability of his Majesty's being able to send a considerable army into Italy this year. Now it appears, that the expectation of his sending one, forms the foundation of all the designs which

the Duke of Mantua has communicated to you. You must be aware, that it would answer no good purpose to undeceive him; because this would be to break off a negociation, which may otherwise have considerable results. Therefore one of the advantages of the journey of the Count Matthioli is, that it gains time; besides, perhaps it may be possible to remove difficulties, and take measures with him in person, which might be difficult to be arranged at a distance. Therefore, Sir, you will see that, as the King cannot grant the principal conditions which have been required, because they all turn upon an action in Italy, we cannot flatter ourselves with concluding any thing with this prince, at present. This is what makes me think, that if it is so particularly necessary for your interests, as you say, to return to France, there is nothing that need prevent your executing your wish. His Majesty appears to me so much satisfied with your services, that, though he has doubtless the intention of making use of them in a sphere which will give them a wider scope than Venice does, he will willingly grant you leave of absence. I have even already made him acquainted with your wish; and it appears to me, that you are at liberty to do

what you choose; either to stay at Venice, or to come to Paris. * * * *

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POMPONNE.†

No. 21.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Conversation with Matthioli.

Venice, April 9th, 1678.

SIR,

The Count Matthioli arrived here six days ago; I had a conversation with him the same evening, and the day after he set off for Bologna, where he was to meet the Duke of Mantua, who will send him from thence to Paris, after having given him his last orders. He assured me that he was charged to confirm to his Majesty all that I have had the honour of acquainting him with, and that

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

his master had only recommended him not to consent to the putting a French garrison into Casale, as long as he could fight it off. But, Sir, he told me at the same time, that he saw too well that this condition was the actual foundation of the proposed treaty, to wish to raise a negociation respecting it; and that he had made the Duke of Mantua understand that it was necessary to act with good faith towards the King, and not to balance about giving him this security and satisfaction, if he wished to attach himself to the interests of his Majesty, as he had determined to do. I perceived notwithstanding, though he did not speak openly of it, that the example of Messina* had made him reflect upon the consequences of the engagement his master was about to make with the King,

* In 1674 the people of Messina in Sicily, unable any longer to bear the harshness of the Spanish Government, revolted. The French assisted them with a body of troops under the command of the Chevalier de Valbelle. In 1676 the Marshal de Vivonne was sent there with a powerful fleet, and gained a complete victory over those of Spain and Holland. But in the beginning of 1678, the French, alarmed at the prospect of a union of England with their enemies, abandoned Sicily to its fate. It is to this latter event that Estrades alludes.

which obliged me to represent to him how much this fear was ill-founded, and what a difference there was between a solemn treaty of two Sovereign Princes, as the one we were now concerting would be, and the assistance which his Majesty had only given to the Messinese from pure generosity.

The Count Matthioli professed to be of my opinion, and to have great joy at seeing affairs as well-disposed as he could possibly have wished.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

No. 22.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

St. Germain, April 13th, 1678.

SIR,

I have already sent you word that the King approves very much of the manner in which you

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

have carried on the negociation with the Duke of Mantua, without either breaking it off or advancing it too much. It is even advantageous, as a very natural means of gaining time, that that Prince should have taken the part of sending the Count Matthioli to the King. We may treat with him according to the propositions he is charged with; but it would be a pity if the foundation of them was to be the condition of sending a powerful army into Italy this year, because I can tell you in confidence, that the King has not yet taken any measures for the purpose.

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POMPONNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 23.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Means of protracting the Negociation.—Views of Matthioli.

Venice, April 30th, 1678.

SIR,

I consider myself very happy, that the King has so much approved of the manner in which I have conducted myself, in the affair of the Duke of Mantua, as you have informed me in the letter which you did me the honour to write to me on the 13th of this month, and that his Majesty has had the goodness to regard more the zeal I have for his service than my capacity. I shall have nothing more in future to tell you on this subject, but the Count Matthioli will give you ample information, when he arrives at Court, of the sentiments of his master; of the state of his affairs; and of what may be expected from them. The disposition in which I have seen him, makes me hope that it will not be impossible to protract this negociation, without running the risk of break-

ing it off, until the season for action is past, and that, when he shall see the necessity that there is of waiting till the King can take measures for sending an army into Italy, he will willingly employ the influence he possesses over the mind of the Duke of Mantua, to take from him all kind of suspicion, and to prevent his being impatient at this delay; perhaps even he might be able to persuade his master, if he should really endeavour it, to put himself under the declared protection of the King, as he has thus far been under that of the House of Austria; and to content himself with his Majesty's paying the garrison he intends to place in Casale. Finally, Sir, this affair will be in such good hands, since it is yourself that will manage it, that even what appears the most difficult in it may very well succeed. I will only add, that I know that the Count Matthioli has a great desire, and need of making his fortune, and that there are few things to which his master would not consent for a considerable sum of money, and from the hope of a great employment; of which, in fact, the title alone need be given to him; as was the case with the Duke of Modena in the service of France, and with the late Duke of Mantua in that of the Emperor,

whose Vicar-general he was in Italy, with the command of an army there.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

No. 24.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Delay in Matthioli's Journey to Paris.

Venice, May 21, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The Count Matthioli has been here for the last four days with his master. He came to me yesterday, to tell me that the Spaniards had been, for the last two months, making such great advances to the Duke of Mantua, that they would, perhaps, have obliged him to consent to all they desired, which was the removing his garrison from Guastalla, introducing the Germans into Casale, and de-

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

claring himself openly against France, if he had separated himself for a single moment from him; the Duchess-mother, and all the council of this Prince, being devoted to the House of Austria. That it was necessary he should wait for the return of the Marquis Galerati from Milan, and that he should remain, besides, three weeks or a month with the Duke of Mantua, who was to go, during that time, to Casale, where he had persuaded him to wait for his return from France. That, therefore, he could not set off till towards the end of June, but that he would not delay beyond that time. I answered him, that he had been in the right to remain with his master, at a time when his presence was so necessary to him; that he ought not to set off on his journey to Paris, till he was well assured that his absence would cause no change, either in the sentiments or the affairs of that Prince, but that I could assure him the King would see him with pleasure, and that he would receive every kind of satisfaction from his journey. * * * *

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 25.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Interview with Matthioli.

Venice, June 11, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The Count Matthioli, who does not lose sight of the Duke of Mantua, for the reasons that I have already informed you of, is come here to make a stay of three or four days with that Prince; he has assured me that he is still in the resolution of setting off, the end of this month, to go to Paris; and that he will first accompany his master to Casale, where he has lately discovered the intrigues of the Spaniards, for the purpose of obtaining possession of that place. I have taken occasion, Sir, to represent to him, that, even if the report, which has been spread of a general peace, should be true, the Duke of Mantua would have still more need of the King's protection; that the House of Austria will not be in a condition to do injury to any Prince, as long as she shall have to contend with the power of his Majesty; but that if she had no longer this obstacle, it would be easy

for her to execute the designs, which his master could not doubt her having against him; that it was greatly his interest to put himself in such a state, that he need not fear being deprived of Casale and the Montferrat, of which the Court of Vienna had declared its wish to put the Empress Eleanor in possession, who had no other view than that of leaving it some day to the Prince of Lorrain,* in favour of his marriage with the widow of the King of Poland; that the Duke of Mantua could not avoid this misfortune, except by procuring for himself the support of the King, by means of an intimate connection of interests; as would be that he would have with him, if his Majesty had a garrison in Casale, which would be paid at his expense, and kept on the same conditions as we had already agreed upon; that this would make him the more secure, from the circumstance of his Majesty's never having had any claims upon his territories, and from his being the only sovereign who was capable of defending them successfully against

* Charles V. Duke of Lorrain, married, in the commencement of this year, Eleanor, daughter of the Emperor Leopold, and widow of Michael Wiecnowiecki, King of Poland. For an account of him, see note, page 49.

those, who thought they had well-grounded claims upon them. I added to this, that if he reflected upon what I told him, he would, without doubt, perceive, that the Duke of Mantua could not take a better line, than the one that I proposed to him. The Count Matthioli answered me, that he was so persuaded of this, and that he was so assured of the aversion which that Prince had for the Spaniards, and of his inclination towards France, that even if at his arrival at Court he should find the peace concluded and published, and that there should be in consequence no more hope of seeing the war in the Milanese, which his master so much wished for there, he would still not hesitate to conclude in his name the affair which we have commenced here, provided the King wished for it. Should this agree with his Majesty's designs, you, Sir, will know better than any body how to make use of the good intentions of the Count Matthioli, when he shall be with you.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 26.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

St. Germain, June 15, 1678.

SIR,

I answer your letters of the 21st and 28th of May, and of the 4th of this month together; the first has made known to the King the reasons which have delayed the Count Matthioli: if they are really such as he told you, and that he has thought his presence necessary, in order to prevent the injurious resolutions to which the Spaniards might have persuaded his master, it is quite right in him not to have left him; it would also be advantageous if he could soon withdraw him from Mantua, and lead him to Casale. It will then be more easy for him to make his journey into France, and to insure the success of the measures which he has concerted with you.

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POMPONNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 27.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

June 22, 1678.

SIR,

The King has seen the letter which you were pleased to write to me, and his Majesty has learnt from it with pleasure, that the Count Matthioli is always in the same sentiments of affection and zeal, which he has already shown for his Majesty. Continue to strengthen him in them, by the hope of the same advantages which you have already shown him that the Duke his master will find in the alliance and protection of the King. The Duke not being in a condition to preserve Casale, without the assistance of some one more powerful than himself, he cannot certainly receive it more usefully and more surely than from the hands of his Majesty. I trust you will labour, as you have already done, to inspire him with the desire of it, from the pleasure that you will have in rendering a very agreeable service to his Majesty.

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POMPONNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 28.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Differences between the Duke of Mantua and the Spaniards.

Venice, July 2, 1678.

SIR,

I see by the letter, which you did me the honour to write to me on the 15th of last month, that you have approved of the assiduity of the Count Matthioli about the Duke of Mantua, from the reasons which I sent you. It will appear to you still more useful, when you are told that he has obliged that Prince to break off the marriage of the great-nephew of Don Vincent of Gonzaga, Viceroy of Sicily, with the second daughter of the late Duke of Guastalla, and sister of the Duchess of Mantua, which was already concluded, and which had been contrived by the Spaniards, in the view of putting him more easily in possession of the Duchy of Guastalla; so that the Duke of Mantua is at present so much at variance with the Spaniards, that it is not difficult to make him comprehend that there

is no other safe part for him to take, than that of putting himself under the protection of the King, and of fulfilling those engagements with his Majesty, which he has already agreed upon. This is what I represented to the Count Matthioli at his last visit to this place, and he was the more easily brought to be of this opinion, because he has a great interest that this affair should succeed, since the Spaniards, who are all-powerful in the councils of his master, and who have the Duchess-mother on their side, have easily discovered that it is he alone who injures them in the mind of the Duke, and would not fail to take vengeance on him, if he ever fell into their hands. He departed yesterday to go and join the Duke of Mantua, whom he does not quit, and whom he is to accompany to Mantua, and afterwards to Casale, from whence he will proceed to Paris: but, by the reckoning that we have made together, he cannot be there before the end of the next month.

* * * * * *

Sir, I am obliged to tell you that the Nuncio is so devoted to the Spaniards, and that he sees with so much chagrin the power of the King, and the weakness of the House of Austria, that he would

be capable of inventing to me a story of this nature, even should it not be true. † *

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.‡

No. 29.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Excuses for the delay of Matthioli.

Venice, July 9, 1678.

SIR,

After what I had the honour of acquainting you with in my last letter, on the subject of the Count Matthioli, I should not have any thing farther to add to-day, if he had not begged me to let you know that he has only remained at Venice some days longer than he originally intended, in order to execute some little commissions which the Duke of Mantua gave him when he left the place; but that he will go and meet that Prince

† As the letter breaks off here abruptly, it is impossible for us to discover to what transaction Estrades alludes.

‡ From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

this week at Mantua, that he will follow him to Casale, and that from thence he will set off to go to Paris, where he expects to arrive during the month of September. We have together calculated the time, and he cannot and ought not to leave his master sooner. He has, however, been apprehensive that these delays might give a bad opinion of him, and he has wished, in order to set his mind at rest, that I would send you the letters he has written to the King and to you, Sir; although I assured him he need not take this trouble, and that it would be sufficient if I bore testimony to his zeal and to his good intentions. * * * *

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

No. 30.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

July 13, 1678.

SIR,

The letter which you were pleased to write to me on the second of this month, has shown the King

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

that the Count Matthioli continues in the same good intentions for his service, and in the design of coming to France. His Majesty sees with pleasure that he is making preparation, in order to be able to finish there the negociation which you have commenced with him; and he has also been well contented that, in order to prevent his master from entering into more intimate engagements with the Spaniards, he has caused to be broken off the marriage, which was on the point of taking place, between the great-nephew of Don Vincent of Gonzaga, Viceroy of Sicily, and the second daughter of the Duke of Guastalla.

POMPONNE.*

No. 31.

ESTRADES TO POMPONNE.

Venice, July 30, 1678.

SIR,

I have nothing new to send you, in return for what you tell me, in the letter which you did me the honour to write to me on the 13th

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

of this month: but as soon as the Duke of Mantua shall be arrived at Casale, I shall be able to inform you precisely of the day on which the Count Matthioli will set off for Paris.

I have heard that the Duke has brought his mother back to Mantua, and that she is ill there of a fever. If God was to call her to himself, without doubt the affair of Casale would be more easy to conclude, and the execution of the treaty would be less difficult; though thus far there is no reason to doubt that in any case it will fail, if his Majesty continues always in the wish of obtaining possession of that place.

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THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

No. 32.

POMPONNE TO ESTRADES.

St. Germain, August 10, 1678.

SIR,

As the King continues always in the intention of profiting by the good dispositions of the Duke

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

of Mantua, his Majesty desires that you will continue to encourage them, as you have already had so much part in originating them. His arrival at Casale, and the journey of the Count Matthioli into France, will show more clearly his inclinations with regard to delivering up that place to his Majesty. * * * *

POMPONNE.†

No. 33.

ESTRADES TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Good dispositions of the Duke of Mantua, and of the Garrison of Casale.

Venice, August 20, 1678.

SIRE,

* * * * * *

The Count Matthioli arrived here the day before yesterday, and he goes away this evening

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

to Mantua. He only came here to assure me, that he would set off infallibly in the first week of next month, to go to your Majesty, as he has done himself the honour of sending you word himself; that the Duke of Mantua is always firm in his design of putting himself under the protection of your Majesty; that all those who have any command in Casale, are devoted to the will of that Prince, and inclined to the French; and that there is so exact a guard kept in that place, that nothing can enter or go out of it, except by the order of the Commandants. I exhorted him not to defer his departure beyond the time he had stated, and I told him that he would be as well received by your Majesty, as he could possibly wish. * * * *

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 34.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, September 3, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The Count Matthioli has sent word to the Ambassador by the Sieur Giuliani, (whom he had despatched to Padua, to learn news respecting his health) that his illness begins to diminish, and that he hopes it will soon permit him to commence his journey to the Court, about the time he agreed on with him. * * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

No. 35.

MATTHIOLI TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Excuses his own delay.

Padua, September 12th, 1678.

SIRE,

The illness, which came upon me while I was getting ready for my departure, has, (as your Ma-

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

jesty has deigned to be informed by the Abbé d'Estrades, your Ambassador at Venice,) occasioned, to my extreme grief, the necessity for me to delay my journey to you. The eagerness I have is extraordinary, to be able with all possible celerity to throw myself at your Majesty's feet. As soon as I shall have recovered in some degree my strength, I will not fail to set off. The present emergency of the Genoese seems to me very opportune for the designs we have in view. I hope to be able, with all respect, to suggest upon this subject also to your Majesty some points of importance. I bow myself before you most humbly.

Of your Majesty, &c.

HERCULES A. MATTHIOLI.†

No. 36.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, September 17th, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The Sieur Giuliani, having gone one day this week to gain information of the state of health of

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

the Count Matthioli, brought back to the Ambassador the letter which the Count had done himself the honour of writing to you,† and which I take the liberty, Sir, of sending you. He sent word at the same time to his Excellency, that now, as he has no more fever, he will return to Mantua, in order to satisfy the impatience of the Duke of Mantua to see him; and that as soon as he shall have regained a little strength, he will not fail to set off, in order that he may arrive at the Court as soon as possible. * * *

De Pinchesne.‡

No. 37.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Fontainebleau, October 6, 1678.

I have received, Sir, this week, your letter of the 17th, together with the two others from M. Matthioli, which were joined to it; but I cannot reply to them till the next post, not having as yet had an opportunity of rendering an account of

† This letter is not published.

‡ From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

them to the King. We shall wait for the arrival of the aforesaid Sieur Matthioli, to know what propositions he intends to make.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.†

No. 38.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Paris, October 14, 1678.

Since the last post, I have found an opportunity to read to the King your letter of the 17th of September, and he appears to me to approve of the account, you give in it, of what regards his interests, in the place where you at present are.

His Majesty has learnt with pleasure, that the Count Matthioli will soon be in a state to come here, when he will listen to him with favour.

* * * * * *

POMPONNE.‡

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

‡ Ibid.

No. 39.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Intention of Estrades to leave Venice.

Venice, October 15, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I sent you word, some time back, that the Abbé d'Estrades was gone into the country, from whence he intended to continue his journey into France. The uneasiness he felt at the delay of the Count Matthioli in his departure, (although it only proceeded from his illness, and from the necessity he had to be near his master,) and his desire to see him set off before him, or at least at the same time, are the causes why he has always deferred his own departure; but having had four days ago a conference with the Count Matthioli, in which he assured him that he would without doubt set off for France to-day, and that he had even received the order of the Duke of Mantua to that effect. * * †

DE PINCHESNE.‡

† The sentence is left thus unfinished in the letter, as published by M. Delort.

‡ From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 40.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Continued Delay of Matthioli.

Venice, October 22d, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

While I was in the belief that the Count Matthioli had set out for the Court, according to the promise he had made to the Abbé d'Estrades in the last conference, which, as I sent you word, Sir, they had together, I have been surprised by learning at this moment, by a letter which he has written to the Sieur Giuliani, who has just brought it me, that some affairs, which he has had to transact with the Duke of Mantua, have obliged him to delay his departure till to-day. He has written to the aforesaid Sieur Giuliani to be to-morrow evening at Verona, in order to continue his journey to the Court from thence. He has judged it proper, in order to keep the whole affair as secret as possible, to take him with him rather than any other, as he is already informed of all the circumstances of the case, the Abbé d'Estrades having made use of him

in all the journeys that were necessary during the course of this affair. He is a very good sort of man, who is already entirely French in his dispositions, and full of affection for the service and interests of the King. * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

No. 41.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, October 29th, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I have received this instant a letter from the Count Matthioli, written from Berheta, on the 26th of this month; in which he acquaints me that he will immediately continue his journey to the Court with the Sieur Giuliani; where, perhaps, they will be arrived before you receive this letter. * * * * *

DE PINCHESNE.‡

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

‡ Ibid.

No. 42.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Versailles, November 4th, 1678.

* * * * * *

According to appearances the Abbé d'Estrades will soon arrive here, and with him the Count Matthioli, through whom we shall be able to know more distinctly the sentiments of the Duke of Mantua. * * * *

POMPONNE.†

No. 43.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

November 11th, 1678.

I have received your letter of the 22d, the principal point of which is, the making the King acquainted with the reason, for which the Count

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

Matthioli did not set off so soon as he had promised the Abbé d'Estrades. We must wait for his arrival to know what he has to propose to the King.

POMPONNE.†

No. 44.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Versailles, November 18th, 1678.

* * * * * *

Neither the Count Matthioli, nor the Sieur Giuliani, are yet arrived here.

* * * * * *

POMPONNE.‡

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

‡ Ibid.

No. 45.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, November 19th, 1678.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I have just received a letter from the Count Matthioli, written from Zurich on the 5th of this month, in which he informs me, that the bad roads have been the cause, which has prevented him from travelling as quick as he could wish in his journey to the Court, but that he hopes to be there in a few days, and perhaps may be arrived before you receive this. * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

No. 46.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, November 26th, 1678.

SIR,

I have received this week the two letters which you did me the honour to write to me, on the 4th

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

and on the 7th of this month. I see by both of them, how much the King is disposed to receive the Count Matthioli favourably, and to listen willingly to his propositions, as soon as he shall be arrived at the Court. I think he must be there at present, as I have again received to-day a letter from him, from Soleure, dated the 9th of this month, in which he informs me that he has made as much expedition as possible, in order to arrive there quickly. * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

No. 47.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

December 2d, 1678.

* * * * * *

I send you only a packet belonging to the Count Matthioli, who arrived here some days ago, and who acquaints the Duke of Mantua with the circumstance. You must take great care to send

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

the letters that are in this packet to their destination.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

No. 48.

Powers granted to Pomponne, to treat with Matthioli.

The Duke of Mantua having testified to his Majesty, through the medium of the Count Matthioli, the extreme desire he has to make known his zeal for his interests; and to acquire for himself, by the most intimate alliances into which he can enter with him, the same friendship and the same protection, which his predecessors have received from France on great and important occasions: His Majesty, therefore, who has always preserved a sincere affection for the family of the aforesaid Duke and for his person, has received with pleasure the sentiments that he has manifested to him; and in order to take the necessary mea-

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

sures with him for an alliance, which shall be both most intimate and most advantageous to the aforesaid Duke, he has given full power to the Sieur de Pomponne, counsellor in ordinary in all his councils, secretary of state and of his commandments and finances, in order to, with the aforesaid Count Matthioli, agree, treat, and sign such articles as to him shall seem good, for this particular alliance with the aforesaid Duke of Mantua; promising, on the honour and word of a king, to consent to, and to confirm and establish now and always, all that the aforesaid Sieur de Pomponne shall, for this effect, conclude and settle, without contravening, or suffering the contravention of any part of it, in any manner whatsoever, and to furnish his ratification of it in proper form, within the time that shall be stipulated by the treaty. In witness whereof his Majesty has signed the present with his hand, and has caused to be affixed to it his privy seal.

Done at Versailles, the 5th day of December, 1678.

LEWIS.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 49.

LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH TO THE DUKE OF MANTUA.

Promises his protection to the Duke.

My Cousin,

The Count Matthioli will instruct you so particularly, both of the manner in which he has acquitted himself of the orders with which you have charged him for me, and of the extreme satisfaction with which I have received the assurances he has given me of your zeal for my interests, that I can have nothing farther to add upon these subjects. I am only desirous of testifying to you myself, the entire confidence which I wish you to place in my friendship. You may promise yourself, that it will be useful and glorious to you upon all occasions; and you may always rely with certainty and security upon my alliance. I hope to be able to give you very evident marks of this in the sequel; and after having borne testimony to you of the satisfaction which the conduct of the Count Matthioli, through the whole of this affair, has given me, I will not lengthen the pre-

sent letter any more, except to pray to God that he may have you, my Cousin, in his holy and worthy keeping.

Written at Versailles, this 8th Dec. 1678.

LEWIS.

(And lower down),

ARNAUD. †

No. 50.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

December 16th, 1678.

* * * * * *

I send you a letter of the King to the Duke of Mantua, which you will deliver to the Count Matthioli, as soon as he shall arrive at Venice, taking care always to keep his journey very secret.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE. ‡

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris. ‡ Ibid.

No. 51.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Interview of Pinchesne with Don Joseph Varano.

Venice, December 24th, 1678.

SIR,

As soon as I had received, together with the letter that you did me the favour to write me on the second of this month, that which the Count Matthioli sent to the Duke of Mantua, under cover to Don Joseph Varano, who is here with that Prince, and who is one of the two persons to whom his Highness has confided the design he has to deliver Casale into the hands of the King, I made known to M. Varano, by the son of the Sieur Giuliani, that I was very desirous of being able to deliver to him a letter from a French gentleman, who was one of his friends, and who had begged me to give it into his own hands. He understood very well what that meant to say; and at the same time sent me word, that if I would find myself that evening in mask at the Opera, he would not fail to be there also; which was exe-

cuted according to our resolution. He told me, when I gave it him, that the Duke of Mantua would be delighted to receive it; because, for some days, he had shown great impatience to hear of the arrival of the Count Matthioli at the court, and to know in what state the affair was, which he was gone there to negociate. He asked me, at the same time, if I could not give him some news upon the subject; but as I know nothing about it, I contented myself with only telling him that I did not doubt but it was in a good train, and that I was persuaded his Highness would receive, on this occasion, the marks of that esteem and friendship which his Majesty has for him. I thought, Sir, I might be permitted to speak to him in these terms; because what I told him was from my own head, and not as if I had received any order to that effect. We afterwards agreed together, that, during the stay of the Duke of Mantua at Venice, we would make use of the same means to deliver to him the letters which might come to me from the Count Matthioli. * * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 52.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

A courier sent to Venice with a new cypher.

St. Germain, December 25th, 1678.

This courier, whom I despatch to you, has orders not to come to your house as a courier, but to enter Venice as a tradesman, or a private French individual, who comes there on his own business: he brings for you a cypher, which you will only make use of in what regards the affairs of the Duke of Mantua, according to the occasions which you may deem necessary after the return of the Count Matthioli. We have been afraid that, for so important an affair, the cypher of the Abbé d'Estrades was too old, and had probably been discovered, in the many times it has passed through the territories of Milan. You will make use of it as usual in your ordinary despatches; but you will only write on the affairs of Mantua in the new one, which this courier brings to you.

Take care to inform us exactly of the arrival of the Count Matthioli, and of all that he shall communicate to you on the subject of his journey.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

No. 53.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Catinat sent to Pignerol.

St. Germain-en-Laye, December 29th, 1678.

These few words are to let you know, that it is necessary for the King's service, that the person who will send you this note, should enter into the citadel of Pignerol, without any body's knowing it. To this effect, cause the Gate of Aid† to remain open till night-fall, and send him one of your servants; or even, if you are able, go yourself

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

† "Porte du Secours."

to meet him, at the place to which his valet will conduct you; in order that he may enter in your suite into the aforesaid citadel, and into the aforesaid dungeon, without any one's perceiving it.

I am truly yours,

De Louvois.*

No. 54.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

D'Asfeld sent to Venice.

St. Germain, Dec. 30, 1678.

The King has despatched this day the Sieur d'Asfeld, Colonel of Dragoons, who is to go to Venice, under pretext of a journey of curiosity and pleasure. He will not come directly to your house, but will appear as a stranger, whom curiosity alone leads to the place where you are. He will afterwards come to see you, as if on account of the

* From the Archives of France.

natural obligation which all Frenchmen have to visit those who are placed in a country for his Majesty's service. He will deliver to you, from me, a short letter, as of introduction for him, in which I request you to contribute to the success of his particular interests at Venice. He will communicate to you the orders he has received; and you will take the necessary measures to make known his arrival to the Count Matthioli, and to arrange a meeting between them, if necessary.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

No. 55.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

St. Germain, Dec. 30, 1678.

SIR,

You will receive this letter by the hands of M. d'Asfeld, who goes to Venice, for an affair which he will communicate to you himself, and of which

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

you will have had, before his arrival, a more particular instruction by my letters. All that I will therefore add is, that you will put an entire reliance on what he tells you, and that you will contribute, in every way that depends on you, to the success of his particular interests at the place where you are.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

No. 56.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, Dec. 31, 1678.

SIR,

In order to deliver to Don Joseph Varano the letter, which I have received for him from the Count Matthioli, at the same time with that which you did me the favour to write on the 9th of this month, I have made use of the same means which I had the honour to acquaint you with in my last letter, and which we had agreed upon together, for the time during which the Duke of Mantua should

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

remain at Venice. He told me, when he received it, that this prince had experienced great pleasure by learning from the first, that the affair was in a good state; and that he was most impatient to hear of the conclusion of it; to which I answered him in two words, that that was a hope which his Highness might, with reason, flatter himself to see realized. * * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

No. 57.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, Jan. 7, 1679.

SIR,

* * * * * *

As soon as the Count Matthioli shall arrive at Venice, I will immediately deliver into his hands the letter which the King has done the Duke of Mantua the honour of writing to him. That prince left this place the day before yesterday, to return

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

to his own States; but he is to come back to Venice towards the end of this month, to pass the rest of the Carnival there. I will keep the journey of the Count Matthioli secret, as you order me; but I beg you to believe, Sir, that it was not necessary you should take the trouble to recommend this to me, since I know very well of what importance it is to preserve an inviolable secrecy in this affair.

* * * * * *

De Pinchesne.†

No. 58.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Venice, Jan 15th, 1679.

Sir,

* * * * * *

I shall execute with all the punctuality possible, every order which it shall please you to give me on this affair; and as soon as the Count Matthioli shall be returned to this place, I will not fail to

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

acquaint you with it, and to give you an exact account of all he shall tell me respecting the business which he has been negociating at the Court.

* * * * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

No. 59.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Arrival of d'Asfeld at Venice.

Venice, Jan. 21st, 1679.

SIR,

Before I received the letter, which you did me the honour to write to me on the 30th of last month, and by which you informed me that the King intended to send here the Count d'Asfeld, Colonel of a regiment of Dragoons, he was already arrived, and had been to see me, to communicate to me the orders he had received from his Majesty; but

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

as he was not charged with any letter from you, for me, I should have had some difficulty in opening my plans to him, in an affair of this consequence, if M. Giuliani, who happened to be with me just then, and who was come to see me for the first time since his return, had not told me, a few moments before, that there would shortly arrive here a gentleman from the King; and if I had not found him himself so well informed of the whole of this affair, that I could have no doubt of the truth of what he told me; since it appeared to me impossible that he could know so much upon the subject without having learnt it from you, or from those who are alone acquainted with it. He told me that M. de Louvois had obliged him, before his departure, to burn the letter which you had given him to deliver to me, from fear lest, if he was stopped in the Milanese, it might give some ground of suspicion to the Spaniards. He even detailed to me so precisely all that it contained, that I could have no farther cause for fear, after I had seen that what he told me, tallied so well with all that you have done me the favour to write to me upon his subject. We have not been able to agree upon any thing together since he has been here, because the

Count Matthioli is not yet arrived; but as he has written to me and to M. Giuliani, from whom he separated himself near Turin, in order to excite less observation, that he will be here in a few days, I hope to be able, by the next post, to give you an account of all we shall have settled with him. I will not fail, Sir, to represent strongly to him, according to the order which M. d'Asfeld has given me, on the part of the King, to that effect, that it is absolutely necessary for the Duke of Mantua to be at Casale by the 20th of next month, to make the exchange of the treaties; and I will make him so clearly understand that diligence is most necessary in an affair of this importance, lest, from delay, it should be discovered, that I am almost bold enough to promise, that he will persuade his master to go there at that time. However, Sir, if this prince, who is accustomed to pass the last days of the Carnival here every year, wished also to do so this year, in order not to make his conduct appear extraordinary; and that he should think that from the 15th of February, which is the first day of Lent, to the 20th, there will be too little time for his journey to Casale, without showing an anxiety which might occasion suspicions; and that, therefore, he might

wish to defer for some days the exchange of the treaties, I think you will approve of my sending you an extraordinary courier to inform you of it; it being impossible for me to do so sufficiently quickly by the post.

De Pinchesne.†

No. 60.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Delays of Matthioli, and of the Duke of Mantua.

Venice, Jan. 28th, 1679.

Sir,

* * * * * *

According to the letters which M. Giuliani and I received last week from the Count Matthioli, we thought he would, without doubt, be this week at Venice, with the Duke of Mantua. However, neither one nor the other are yet arrived, on account of a slight illness which the Duchess dowager

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

of Mantua has had, which has obliged that prince to remain with her; but the Sieur Giuliani has received to-day a letter from Don Joseph Varano, in which he informs him, that the Count Matthioli is at present at Padua, where he is waiting for the Duke of Mantua, in order that they may come here together, on Monday, or Tuesday at the latest. This has obliged M. d'Asfeld and myself to send Giuliani this evening to Padua, to the Count Matthioli, to give him intelligence of the arrival of M. d'Asfeld at Venice, and to represent to him that it is of the last importance, on account of the shortness of the time, for us to have, as soon as possible, a conference together, in order to take all the measures that shall be necessary to induce the Duke of Mantua to be at Casale the 20th or 25th of next month, according to the wish of the King.

I think I can say to-day more securely than I did last week, that I shall inform you by the next post of all we shall have arranged with the Count Matthioli, since certainly the next week will not pass away without our meeting.

De Pinchesne.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 61.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Farther Delays of Matthioli.

Venice, February 4th, 1679.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The Duke of Mantua has been here since Tuesday. The Count Matthioli was to have come with him, but the fever he has been suffering from for the last ten or twelve days prevented him, and obliged him to remain at Padua, where he still is, for the purpose of going through a course of remedies. Nevertheless, Sir, as time presses, M. d'Asfeld and I have sent M. Giuliani to him twice this week, to represent to him the necessity we have of seeing him, to arrange together the day when the Duke of Mantua is to be at Casale. He has sent us word for answer, that to-morrow he will certainly be at Venice, whatever his state of health may be, and that on Monday or Tuesday, at the latest, we may see one another, to

conclude all things; after which, M. d'Asfeld can set off for Pignerol: that, besides, he could assure us, that in all the conversations he had had with the Duke of Mantua, since his return from France, he had found that Prince in the best possible dispositions for the success of the affair, within the time that had been fixed upon with you, and that he had even done himself the honour of acquainting you with this in a letter which he had written you. I have also seen, within the last two days, Don Joseph Varano, who has also given me assurances to the same effect on the part of his master. So, Sir, there is every reason to hope, that the King will soon receive the satisfaction that he expects from this business. When M. d'Asfeld and myself shall see the Count Matthioli, we will represent to him the diligence that is necessary to be made use of in this affair; which is the more so, because the march of the troops towards Pignerol begins to give suspicion to the Spaniards in the Milanese, although thus far they are persuaded that they are only sent to that place to work at the fortifications. M. d'Asfeld, who, as well as myself, is rendered uneasy by the delay of the Count Matthioli, had made a resolu-

tion, on Friday evening, to go and pay him a visit at Padua, and to take as a pretext his wish to go and see some of the towns of the Terra Ferma; but we reflected, that two days, more or less, was not of great consequence; and that, besides the uselessness of this journey, since it is necessary that the Count Matthioli should speak to the Duke of Mantua before he can settle any thing with us, it might also cause some suspicion in his inn, where there are many strangers, if he was seen to leave Venice during the time when the diversions there are at their height, to go and make a tour in towns where there are none. Therefore we have thought, that it was better to wait the arrival of the Count Matthioli in this city, in order not to risk any thing by too much precipitation, in an affair in which secrecy is so necessary, and respecting which one can never take too many precautions.

* * * * * *

DE PINCHESNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 62.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, Feb. 7th, 1679.

I send you a letter for the same person* to whom you were to deliver the two packages, which the individual named Barrere ought to have brought you by this time. I beg that you will give it to him, and send me by the return of the same courier, who will deliver to you this letter, whatever answer he shall make to it. The person who despatches this courier from Lyons, has orders to tell him, that he is the bearer of the letters of Madame Fouquet. It will be right for you to tell him the same thing when you send him back. You will observe, if you please, to put an envelope over your letter to me, addressed to the Sieur Du Bois, Clerk of the Foreign Post at Lyons.

If the person to whom you have to deliver this

* This person was Catinat, who was now on his way to Pignerol, under the assumed name of Richemont.

letter is not arrived, you will send me word of it by the return of the courier, and will keep the letter till his arrival.

De Louvois.*

No. 63.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Interviews with Matthioli—Farther Delays in the Ratification of the Treaty.

Feb. 7th, 1679.

We had hoped, M. d'Asfeld and I, according to the promises which had been given us to this effect by the Count Matthioli, through M. Giuliani, as often as we sent him to Padua, that we might be able to dispose the Duke of Mantua to go to Casale the 25th of this month, according to the King's intentions; but notwithstanding all that we have been able to allege to the Count in the two conferences we have had with him, last

* From the Archives of Francè.

Thursday and this morning, we have not been able to succeed, and we have therefore been obliged to defer the day of the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty till the 10th of next March; on which day the Duke of Mantua promises to be, most assuredly, and without any farther delay, at Casale.

We have despatched you this extraordinary courier, Sir, to give you intelligence of this; and we have so strongly recommended diligence to him, that we hope our letters will still arrive soon enough at Court, to afford the King sufficient time to give whatever orders his Majesty shall judge necessary, for the delaying of the march of the troops towards Pignerol.

M. d'Asfeld writes in this intention to M. de Louvois; but I will take the liberty to request you, Sir, in case the King has any new orders to give us on this affair, to order them to be sent directly to me; because, as it is possible that M. d'Asfeld may be obliged to depart before they arrive, I could not be made acquainted with them if they were sent to him, the cypher he has received from M. de Louvois being different to

that which you have sent me. We think, nevertheless, we can assure you, Sir, that we do not see, from this delay of time, any reason to doubt the sincerity of the sentiments of the Duke of Mantua; who has again assured us, through the Count Matthioli, that he is more than ever in the intention of executing the treaty he has just made with his Majesty, and of keeping the promise he has given to him.

The Count Matthioli had written to you; but as his letter was not in cypher, and did not contain any thing but what I have sent you word of in this, I have not thought it necessary to send it to you.

De Pinchesne.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 64.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, February 15th, 1679.

* * * * * *

When the affairs for which the Sieur de Richemont is with you shall be concluded, you may, &c.† * * * *

De Louvois.‡

No. 65.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

February 17th, 1679.

I have given an account to the King of what you tell me, in your last letter of the 28th of January, you have done concerning the affair which is entrusted to you, and of your expecting

† The sentence is left thus imperfect in M. Delort's publication. The whole letter, however, is published in the work entitled "Les philosophes et les gens de lettres des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles à la Bastille." The rest of the letter does not refer to Matthioli's affair.

‡ From the Archives of France.

the Count Matthioli soon, from the assurance that the Sieur Giuliani had given you to that effect. His Majesty was very glad to see that you still have hopes both of the success of the affair, and of prevailing upon the Duke of Mantua to leave Venice on the 20th or 25th of this month.

I have nothing particular to acquaint you with, beyond what you already know. You will continue, if you please, to inform me exactly of all that shall pass on this subject; even despatching me an extraordinary courier if you shall deem it necessary.

POMPONNE.†

No. 66.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Reasons for the Duke of Mantua's delay in going to Casale.

Venice, February 18th, 1679.

SIR,

* * * * * *

The necessity, which M. d'Asfeld and myself were under a week ago, of sending off in all haste

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

the courier whom we despatched to the Court, prevented me, Sir, from being able to acquaint you in the letter, which I then did myself the honour to write to you, with the reasons, which the Count Matthioli has alleged to us, to make us understand that the Duke of Mantua cannot be at Casale the 25th of this month, according to the wishes of the King expressed to him by us. He told us three: the first was, that this Prince, wishing to send to Casale, as soon as he should be arrived there, his guards and the greater part of his court, (intending to make some stay there after the conclusion of the affair,) it became necessary for him for this purpose to have some money, which could not be got in so short a time. The second, that it was absolutely necessary first to persuade Don Vincent Gonzaga,* who is at present at Mantua, to make this journey with his Highness, since, being the presumptive heir of the Duke of Mantua, it would be very dangerous to leave him at Mantua, at the time when the affair of Casale would be known; because the Mantuans regarding him as likely to be their future sovereign, there would be danger that they

* See note, page 18.

might allow themselves to be persuaded by him to rebel against the Duke of Mantua, which, without doubt, he would not fail to try to make them do, when he should see that his Highness was attaching himself to the party of France, and abandoning that of the House of Austria, to which Don Vincent is absolutely devoted. And the third, the obligation under which the Duke of Mantua found himself of holding here a sort of carousel with several Venetian gentlemen, to whom he had given his promise to that effect, which he could not now retract, without occasioning some suspicion here. This last reason, Sir, although the least considerable of the three, appears to me notwithstanding to be a truer one than the others; because this Prince is so much attached to all pleasures, of whatever kind they may be, that when he finds an occasion of indulging in them, the most important affairs cannot turn him away from them. This little carousel is certainly to take place some day next week; after which the Count Matthioli has assured us that the Duke of Mantua will, without doubt, leave this place, in order to be at Casale the 10th of next month, as he has promised us; his people are even to set off to-day to return to Mantua. To-morrow

we are to have another conference with the Count Matthioli, to regulate in what manner M. d'Asfeld is to open the business at Casale with the Duke of Mantua, for the purpose of making the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty. Meanwhile, Sir, I think it right to inform you, that the march of the troops to Pignerol, and the munitions and money which are carried there, cause great fear through the whole of Italy; and that it is said publicly here, that the King has some great plan, without its being possible to penetrate what it is, suspicions falling upon Casale, upon Geneva, upon Savoy, and more particularly upon the Republic of Genoa, on account of what has lately passed there: I even know that M. Contarini* has written in these terms to Venice. There are also two couriers, arrived during the last eight or ten days from Turin, at Milan; the one despatched by *Madame Royale*† to her envoy, and the other by the Duke of Gioninazze‡ to the government of

* Contarini was at this time Ambassador from the Republic of Venice to the Court of Lewis the Fourteenth.

† The Duchess of Savoy. For an account of her, see note, page 32.

‡ The Spanish Envoy at the Court of Turin.

Milan, to give them intelligence of these movements. The Count Matthioli has told us, that the Duke of Mantua intended to make an excuse for his journey to Casale, by saying, that the fear he is in of the designs of France, obliges him to go to that place, to give the necessary orders for its security. I have just now learnt, that a courier is arrived to the Spanish Ambassador from Milan. I am persuaded he is sent for the same reasons I have before stated.

* * * * * *

De Pinchesne.†

No. 67.

POMPONNE TO MATTHIOLI.

February 21st, 1679.

Sir,

I have received the letters, that you have taken the trouble to write to me, and I think I cannot do better than address my answer to them to the

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

care of the Abbé d'Estrades, as you intend making a journey to Turin. I have not failed to give an account to the King of your sorrow at the long delay of an affair, which was commenced and is to be concluded through your means. His Majesty is still willing to promise himself a good success in it, and will not entertain any doubt of the promise, which has been so solemnly given to him, being kept. You know how much you may promise yourself from his goodness when you shall have accomplished the success of the project, of which you yourself laid the foundation. Upon this subject the Abbé d'Estrades will speak to you still more in detail, and therefore I will not lengthen this letter any more than to assure you, that I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 68.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Arrangements for the Exchange of the Ratifications of the Treaty.

Venice, February 25th, 1679.

SIR,

* * * * * *

I sent you word in my last letter of the reports, which the march of the troops to Pignerol caused through the whole of Italy: these have much increased this week from the news which has been received that M. de Vauban† is gone there by the King's order; which makes it be believed more than ever, that his Majesty certainly meditates some great design on that side, although the strongest suspicion falls always on Genoa, and, next to that, on Casale. The Spanish Ambassador, and the Abbé Frederic, the resident of the Emperor, went together on Wednesday to the Duke of Mantua, to tell him they had heard from

† Sebastian Le Prêtre, Marquis of Vauban, the celebrated Engineer; Marshal of France in 1703; Died in 1707.

Turin that he wished to give Casale and the Montferrat to the King, and to represent to him the disadvantages that would arise to all Italy from this measure, and particularly to the House of Austria, on account of the Duchy of Milan. That Prince answered them, that he was astonished they could believe in reports of this nature, which had no solid foundation. This answer was all they could draw from him on the subject. Nevertheless, Sir, as he is always in the intention of executing the treaty he has made with the King, which he has again assured us through the Count Matthioli, M. d'Asfeld and I have had two more conferences this week with the aforesaid Count, the last of which was yesterday evening; in which we arranged that M. d'Asfeld and he should find themselves on the 9th of next month at Notre-Dame d'Incréa, which is a village ten miles from Casale, in order to make there the exchange of the ratifications; and that the Duke of Mantua should arrive without fail at Casale on the evening of the 15th, to wait there for the troops of his Majesty, and to put them in possession of the place when they should arrive there on the

18th, which is the day that M. d'Asfeld has said they would be there, having, according to the order of M. de Louvois, demanded nine days between that of the exchange of the ratifications and that of their arrival at Casale. M. d'Asfeld left this place yesterday after this conference to go to Pignerol, and the Count Matthioli is to set off this evening for Incréa: but as the Duke of Mantua wishes to remain only a single day at Mantua, and intends to travel post to Casale, he will remain here till the 11th or 12th of next month: it is even better he should do so, because as long as they shall see him amusing himself here with a carousel and similar trifles, there will be less suspicion of him than if they saw him take his departure. * * * * *

De Pinchesne.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 69.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Suspicions of the House of Austria respecting the Negociations.

Venice, March 4th, 1679.

SIR,

* * * * * *

All the advices that come from France and from Turin declare so positively that the Duke of Mantua has made a treaty with the King for the cession of Casale and of the Montferrat, that they are beginning here to change into certainties those suspicions which I mentioned to you, Sir, in my two last letters, they had had, ever since the first news arrived at Milan by the couriers which Madame Royale and the Duke of Gioninazze despatched there. The Governor of Milan immediately sent two others to Madrid and Vienna to give intelligence to the Emperor and the King of Spain. The courier, who was sent to Vienna, returned here on Wednesday evening, with express orders to the Marquis Canozza, the Imperial Vicar, in Italy, to

speak strongly to the Duke of Mantua, and to try and deter him from doing a thing so contrary to the interests of the whole House of Austria; and to go afterwards to Turin and Milan, to concert there the means of preventing it, in case the news proved true. This same Marquis Canozza having been, for the last five or six months, in the prisons of Venice, accused of having had a gentleman of Verona assassinated, the Emperor has also written by the same courier to the Republic, to beg that he may be enlarged, which was done on Thursday evening. He has not been able as yet to see the Duke of Mantua, who defers, as much as he can, giving him audience, in order to gain time. The fear I have been in, Sir, lest what he has to say to this Prince, from the Emperor, might be capable of producing some change in him, has obliged me to charge M. Giuliani to go, as from me, to Don Joseph Varano, who is at present, since the departure of Count Matthioli, the only confidant of the Duke of Mantua, to try to know from him what are the sentiments of his master upon the subject of this mission. He has answered me, that his master would assuredly execute the treaty he has made with his Majesty, notwithstanding the ob-

stacles which the House of Austria puts in the way of it, and that he would leave this place on Wednesday or Thursday, in order to arrive at Casale within the time at which he has promised to be there. All that we have to fear is, that the Spaniards, who are extremely suspicious, may watch him, and oppose his passage,† and that of the Count Matthioli, of whom they have an equal distrust. * * * * *

De Pinchesne.‡

No. 70.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

Arrest of d'Asfeld.—Departure of the Duke of Mantua from Venice.

Venice, March 11th, 1679.

Sir,

The courier, whom we sent you a month ago, not having complied with the order I had given

† Through the Duchy of Milan.

‡ From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

him to write to me as soon as he should be arrived at Lyons, in order to acquaint me whether he had passed through the Milanese without being arrested, I was under great uneasiness until I received the letter, in which you do me the favour to inform me that you have received the despatch which I sent you by him. You may believe, Sir, that when M. d'Asfeld and I were obliged to defer the day of the exchange of the ratifications till the 10th of this month, we did not do so, till we saw that it was impossible to persuade the Duke of Mantua to perform his part within the period desired by the King.

All the world says here, that he is to go away this evening, or to-morrow, without his suite; and he has always told us, through the Count Matthioli, that when he left this place, he would only pass through Mantua, and travel post from thence to Casale. He has still more time than is necessary for him to be there before the 18th of this month, which is the day when the troops of the King are to enter the place, according to what we agreed upon with the Count Matthioli.

M. Giuliani has received a letter from him* this

* Matthioli.

week, in which he writes him word that M. d'Asfeld has been arrested at La Canonica, which is a village beyond Bergamo, but that he was released shortly after.

I do not know, Sir, if this news is really true, it having been impossible for me to verify it, and the Count Matthioli only writing word of it because a *voiturier*, whom he met on the road, told him that a gentleman whom he had conducted three or four days ago from Verona to La Canonica, had been arrested at the latter place, and released afterwards. In any case, I cannot doubt but that you are already informed of it, since the Count mentions, in the same letter, that it has been written to the Abbé d'Estrades, who will not certainly have failed to make you acquainted with it.

* * * * * *

I have just this moment heard, Sir, that the Duke of Mantua set off yesterday evening at four o'clock at night,† and that the Marquis Canozza is also gone to Verona, which is his country, from

† According to the Italian mode of reckoning the hours.

whence it is believed he will be very likely to go to Milan.

DE PINCHESNE.*

No. 71.

POMPONNE TO MATTHIOLI.

Letter of Credence to be presented to Matthioli by Catinat.

St. Germain, March 14, 1679.

SIR,

The King has been informed by the Sieur de Pinchesne, of all the measures which you have taken with him and with M. d'Asfeld, for the execution of the affair, which has been conducted by your labours, and of the time which the Duke of Mantua has arranged for being at Casale. He is, besides, aware that M. d'Asfeld was to leave Venice some days earlier, according to the agreement that you had made together; but as he

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

learns by his letters from Piedmont, that it is very possible he may have been arrested in his passage through the Milanese, and placed in the Castle of Milan, he has judged it right to supply his place with the person who will deliver you this letter; it is the same whom he has honoured principally with his confidence for the execution and the conduct of all that shall be to be done with you and the Duke of Mantua, after the arrival of that Prince at Casale. Therefore you will, if you please, place entire confidence in him, and particularly in the assurances which he will give you of the good-will of his Majesty for you, and of his sense of the service you are rendering to him.

For myself, Sir, I entreat you to believe me with the most perfect truth, &c.

POMPONNE.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 72.

ESTRADES TO MATTHIOLI.

Complaints of the Delays in the Conclusion of the Negociation.

Turin, March 24th, 1679.

I have thought it my duty, Sir, to give you advice of my arrival at this court, in order that you may be able to let me know whatever you shall judge necessary; and that whatsoever remains to be done, for the termination of what has been already resolved, may be the more easy of execution, from the proximity of the places at which we respectively are. You cannot doubt its being with this view, that the wish has been expressed for my coming here; and I have been the more glad to come, because I hoped that I should not be long without seeing the effect of the engagements which you have entered into with the King. If I was not aware of your probity and of your zeal for the interests of his Majesty, and for the advantage of the Prince to whom you are attached, I should have been dreadfully uneasy at the

delay of our affair, which ought without fail, and at the latest, to have been concluded at the commencement of this month. But though we are already at the 24th, and that all you can desire on our part is entirely ready, I cannot persuade myself that the intentions of his Highness and your own are other than they always were. You have been so well aware, how much this affair would be useful to him at present, and glorious for the future, and you have made him so well comprehend this, that I cannot have any suspicions on this head; neither can I, when I represent to myself the very considerable interest you have in completing an affair of this importance, of which the conclusion will be considered so great a merit on your part in the eyes of the most generous and the greatest King in the world, who has testified to you himself the good-will he bears you for it; who has praised the address with which you have conducted the negociation; who has begun by giving you several marks of his esteem and liberality; and who has promised you besides such great advantages as would be sufficient to establish all your family, and to make you happy for the rest of your days. As his word has always been

inviolable, you no doubt rely upon it implicitly: you must be aware, also, how dangerous it would be to deceive him, and that, after all the steps he has taken, and the measures he has agreed upon, you would expose his Highness, and yourself, to very great misfortunes, if his Majesty had reason to think that bad faith had been made use of towards him, after a treaty concluded in all the proper forms with himself, and founded upon a full power; the inexecution of which would only serve to ruin a Prince, who abandons himself to your councils, and who would be infallibly stripped by the Spaniards, who would be willing once for all to deliver themselves from the alarms which they have received from the reports spread about on all sides respecting this affair. I have already told you, Sir, that I believe you as well-intentioned as ever, and that it is not for the purpose of exciting you to return to these good sentiments, or to strengthen them, that I speak to you in this manner; but only lest a longer delay should diminish the good opinion entertained of you, and lest umbrage should be taken that an affair in which secrecy was so important, has been made public, although the King, and those who have

the honour to serve him, have kept the secret so well that it cannot have been got at through them. I hope, nevertheless, that we shall soon be satisfied; and that I shall have the pleasure to see you worthily recompensed for your zeal: I assure you, Sir, that your interest, more than my own, though I have much in this affair, makes me desirous of it.

THE ABBÉ D'ESTRADES.*

No. 73.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, March 26th, 1679.

I have received your letter of the 21st of this month. You will have seen by my former ones, that the King approves of the officers of the citadel of Pignerol visiting your prisoners, and passing the mornings and afternoons with them when they desire it, in the presence of one of your

* From the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

own officers.* I can only now repeat the same thing to you, and tell you, that with regard to the governor, the officers, and the inhabitants of the town, you may act in the same manner by them, when you shall judge fit: not, however, until after the affair, for which the Sieur de Richemont is at Pignerol, shall have succeeded or failed.

I address to you a packet for the Abbé d'Estrades, which you will send him, if you please, by one of your officers, with a direction in your handwriting; and when he shall have despatched to you his answer, you will send it to me by the return of the same courier, whom, in the mean while, you will keep concealed in the prison.

De Louvois.†

* Saint-Mars only commanded in that part of the citadel of Pignerol which was appropriated to the use of a State-prison.

† From the Archives of France.

No. 74.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

St. Germain, March 26th, 1679.

The King is extremely anxious for the success of the affair of the Duke of Mantua. We have heard nothing from M. d'Asfeld, and, therefore, can have no doubt of his being prisoner in the Milanese. The news which you received of his being arrested at La Canonica, was doubtless as true as that of his being released again was the reverse. We shall now see if the firmness of the Duke of Mantua, which has thus far resisted the efforts of the Count Carrossa, and of the Republic of Venice, will continue to the end: we cannot be long without having this point cleared up, if, as you mention in your letter of the 11th, he had set off the night before to go to Casale. Your next letters will, of course, bring us fresh intelligence upon the subject.

POMPONNE.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris

No. 75.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Suspicions of the Fidelity of Matthioli.

St. Germain, April 5th, 1679.

I have received your letter of the 18th of March, which shows the bad state in which, according to the Count Matthioli's own accounts, the affair of Mantua is: he is very possibly, as you say, the sole author of all the accidents and impediments in it, which he writes word, in his letter to Giuliani, have happened. Your next letters will give us still clearer intelligence on this subject; but we have many reasons for apprehending that this negociation, which appeared so much advanced, may fail at last, when we were in the immediate expectation of seeing it happily concluded. * * * * *

POMPONNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 76.

CHANOIS TO LOUVOIS.

Reports of Catinat being at Pignerol—Different Rumours respecting the Negociation.

Pignerol, April 5th, 1679.

As I have discovered, Sir, since the last post, that the Marquis d'Herleville (governor of Pignerol) is aware that M. de Richemont is incognito in the citadel of this town, and that, in fact, he knows his real name; I do myself the honour of acquainting you with the circumstance. M. de Saint-André even sends word, that he has been told at Turin, that M. de Catinat is to take him with him to Casale. I do not know how they can have discovered so much, unless it is, that the absence of M. de Catinat has given occasion to some of the Guards* to write from Paris, that he is in these parts. These reports also mention the days on

* The Officers of the French Guards, of whom Catinat, at this time, was one.

which he has gone out of the citadel, and the spot where the Abbé d'Estrades came to speak to him the last time from Turin. I have answered nothing when I have heard these things said, except that I knew of no one in the citadel, and nothing upon the subject.

The Marquis of Saint-Maurice told several people that the French Ambassador wished to be very cunning; but that *he* knew very well that there had been a treaty made between the King and the Duke of Mantua, on the subject of Casale; and that he also knew that during the last ten days it had been absolutely broken off. The retrograde movements of the troops cantoned in the Briançonnois and the valley of Chaumont, on the side of Dauphiny and Provence, seem to confirm the report of the Marquis of Saint-Maurice; but the arrival of the battalion of the regiment of Piedmont in this town two days ago, makes the people of the country, who love to reason upon every thing, suspend their judgments; their reasonings will be of no importance, if the Duke's sentiments are always well disposed, for between this place and Casale there is no fortress, nor any

obstacle which can delay the march of the King's troops.

I am always with profound respect, &c.

DE CHANOIS *

No. 77.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Pignerol, April 8th, 1679.

SIR,

The roads being good, and the days as long as they are at present, a body of cavalry can go in less than thirty hours from Pignerol to Casale. There is no fortified place through which we should be obliged to pass, and I am not aware of any difficulty that we could find on the passage, provided we took the country by surprise in our march. I have thought it right to state this to you, Sir, because the possibility of using this degree of diligence may materially assist the mea-

* Chanois was a French Commissary at Pignerol. This letter is extracted from the work of M. Roux (Favillac).

sures you may wish to take. The Duke of Mantua has never been at Casale, which seems to me an obstacle to the finding good excuses for his going there, at a time when his conduct is so much watched and suspected. But we could do very well without him, if he is always well-intentioned, and if he is the master of a good part of his garrison. The Governor is of Mantua, and therefore his actual subject; which is perhaps a favourable circumstance.

I am, &c.

CATINAT.*

No. 78.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Rumours of Catinat's being at Pignerol.—Civilities of Saint-Mars to him.

April 15th, 1679.

SIR,

M. d'Herleville must have received some letters from Paris by the last post, which have given him

* From the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

the suspicion that I might be here; at least, he has put some leading questions on the subject to M. de Chanois: he is not a man without curiosity, and he thought by these means to gain certain intelligence. As I have been now a long while absent, and there has been no doubt at Paris of some design in agitation in these parts, on account of the troops which have been sent here, it is probable that some reasoner of the regiment of Guards, or some other person, may have given him this idea.

I did myself the honour to send you word, Sir, of all that passed in my journey to Incréa. I have received letters from the Abbé d'Estrades, in which he informs me that the troops have retired a little, in order to get into quarters where they can subsist more conveniently; and also of the accounts he has received respecting the delay in the execution of the affair you are acquainted with. I am treated here with so much attention and civility, that a long residence, while waiting for intelligence, ought not to give me any impatience, nor can I complain of any, except that which is caused by my anxiety and zeal to see the conclusion of an affair which his Majesty is anxious about, and for

the conduct of which you, Sir, have thought proper to honour me with your confidence. I should have some uneasiness at being for so long a time a burden and an inconvenience to M. de Saint-Mars; but he executes with so much pleasure the orders which he receives from you, that all the care he takes of me does not distress me. I receive it all as a very evident mark of the kindness with which you, Sir, write to him on my subject, for which I am infinitely obliged to you; as well as for the honour you do me in permitting me to remain, with all the respect that is due to you,

Your very humble and very obedient Servant,

De Richemont.*

* In his correspondence with Louvois, Catinat sometimes signs with his real name, and sometimes with his assumed one of Richemont. This letter is extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

No. 79.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Continued Suspicions of Matthioli.

St. Germain, April 18th, 1679.

The account you gave me in your letter of the 25th of last month of the conversation you had had with the Count Matthioli, could not be more exact. It is still very difficult to discover what is the real case with this affair, and whether the good faith that was to be desired in it has been kept to. Try to discover this adroitly, but without showing any suspicions; and be careful to inform me of every thing that shall come to your knowledge upon the subject.

This is all I have to reply to your letter. The rest does not require any particular answer.

POMPONNE.*

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 80.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, April 18th, 1769.

I have received your letter of the 8th of this month. The period of time during which M. de Richemont will have to remain in the place where he is at present being uncertain, I advise you to let him walk with your prisoners, even if it should only be in the dungeon. You may even permit him to pay them visits, and to converse with them, which will assist in enabling him to pass the time of his stay, which, whether it will be long or short, I cannot at present tell you.

* * * * * *

De Louvois.†

† From the Archives of France.

No. 81.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Confirmation of the Suspicions respecting Matthioli's want of Fidelity.

St. Germain, April 19th, 1679.

The account you have given in your letter of the first of this month, of your interview with the Count Matthioli, of the assurances he gave you of his good intentions, and of the journey he was preparing to make to the Abbé d'Estrades, does not prevent his being suspected, with great reason, of want of fidelity. Do not, however, let him discover, in case you see him again, the knowledge we have upon this subject, but tell him always that we cannot doubt but that the Duke of Mantua will execute the promises he has so solemnly given through him. In truth, this Prince ought not to be allowed to believe, that it is permitted to him to fail in a treaty he has made with his Majesty; and if the occasion presents itself, make it appear to him that you can have no doubt of the promises which have been made to the King being kept, and of the engagements which

have been once entered into with him being executed. Take care to inform us exactly, as you have already done, of all that shall take place in his affair, and of the manner in which it shall continue to be regarded at Venice.

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.*

No. 82.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Order to receive Matthioli as a Prisoner.

Saint Germain, April 27th, 1679.

The King has sent orders to the Abbé d'Estrades, to try and arrest a man, with whose conduct his Majesty has reason to be dissatisfied; of which he has commanded me to acquaint you, in order that you may not object to receiving him, when he shall be sent to you, and that you may guard him in a manner, that not only he may not have communication with any one, but that also

* From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

he may have cause to repent of his bad conduct; and that it may not be discovered that you have a new prisoner.

DE LOUVOIS.*

No. 83.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

Farther confirmation of the Treachery of Matthioli.

St. Germain, May 3d, 1679.

The letter you wrote me on the 15th of last month, has confirmed to the King the treachery of the Count Matthioli, which already was but too much suspected. There never was so signal a piece of perfidy. We must hope that the sentiments of his master will not be of the same kind, and that he will not wish to break the promises he has given to his Majesty. Meanwhile we hear that this Count has arrived at Turin, where he thinks, without doubt, to impose again upon the Abbé d'Estrades. It is important always not to show that you are acquainted with his conduct.

POMPONNE.†

* From the Archives of France.

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 84.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Arrest of Matthioli.

Pignerol, May 3d, 1679.

I arrested Matthioli yesterday, three miles from hence, upon the King's territories, during an interview which the Abbé d'Estrades had ingeniously contrived between him, Matthioli, and myself, to facilitate the scheme. For the purpose of arresting him, I only made use of the Chevalier de Saint-Martin and de Villebois, two officers of M. de Saint-Mars, and of four men of his company: it was effected without any violence, and no one knows the name of the rascal, not even the officers who assisted in his arrest: he is in the chamber which the individual named Dubreuil occupied, where he will be treated civilly, according to the request of the Abbé d'Estrades, until the wishes of the King, with regard to him, are known. I do not write any thing to you, Sir, respecting the certain conviction we have acquired of the villanies of this man, the Abbé d'Estrades having already given his Majesty all the information

possible upon this subject. In the interview we had together before his arrest, we talked of various things, and among others of the place in which he had placed the essential and original papers respecting the affair in question, which consist in a letter of the Duke of Mantua to the King, the full powers he himself had for negociating, the treaty of his Majesty, executed by M. de Pomponne, the ratification of the aforesaid treaty signed by the Duke of Mantua, and a letter of the Duke of Mantua to the Governor of Casale, ordering him to receive the troops of the King in conformity with the treaty. All these papers are in a box at Bologna, in the hands of his wife, who is retired into the convent of the Nuns of Saint Lewis. The Abbé d'Estrades is of opinion that no time should be lost in obtaining these papers. As I only brought this man here yesterday very late, and that the post goes early this morning, I have not as yet had any conversation with him, for the purpose of obtaining his papers; but two hours hence I will go to his room, and I do not doubt the menaces I shall make to him, which his criminal conduct will render more terrific to him, will oblige him to do all that I wish. I have

chosen M. de Blainvilliers, a choice approved of also by M. de Saint-Mars, to go to Bologna, considering him as very capable to conduct himself well in such a business. I will try to give him a route by which he will avoid passing over the territories of the King of Spain. I will give an account to you, Sir, the next post, of all that I shall have done on this subject with Matthioli, to whom I have given here the name of Lestang, no one here knowing who he really is.

I am, &c.

RICHEMONT.*

No. 85.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Intelligence respecting Matthioli's Papers.

Pignerol, May 6th, 1679.

SIR,

Since I did myself the honour of writing to you, I have taken down shortly in writing all the information I have been able to draw from the

* From the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

Sieur de Lestang. By making him perceive, and roughly too, the misery to which his bad conduct exposed him, I induced him to seek for the means of avoiding it, by doing readily and frankly all that was desired of him. I have not said any thing to him which could make him discover the means by which we have been so certainly informed of his treachery; but I have spoken to him in such a manner on that subject that he cannot doubt that we know it, and are convinced of it. He is a rascal; but I believe him to be honest in his desire of delivering up the papers, either from the fear which his present condition causes him, or with the view of rendering a service to the King, which may be agreeable to him, and may make him forget what is past. The original papers are at Padua, concealed in a hole in the wall of a room, which is in his father's lodging, and which he says is known to him alone. These papers are the treaty made by M. de Pomponne, signed by him and by Matthioli, signed below by the Duke of Mantua, a blank being left for the insertion of the ratification, when the exchange should be made for that of the King; a blank paper signed by the Duke of Mantua, intended for a letter to the Go-

vernor of Casale, to order him to receive the troops of the King; the full power given to M. de Pomponne to treat with him respecting Casale; and a list of the troops destined to the execution of this affair. If we once have possession of these papers, the affair is concluded as far as regards negociation; but this is a fact that we need only make known when we think proper. As I am aware of what importance it is to have possession of these original papers, I have acquainted the Abbé d'Estrades with the expedients I thought might be made use of for this purpose, in order that I may be assisted by his advice. I do not detail them at present to you, Sir, because I expect to-day the Sieur Giuliani, whom the Abbé d'Estrades is to send to me, together with the Abbé de Montesquiou, his relation, for the purpose of the former's being confronted with the Sieur de Lestang. As this interview will probably suggest to me more certain means of getting possession of these papers, I will not, as yet, acquaint you, Sir, with those that I had proposed to myself. There are, besides, other papers at Bologna, which are only letters and papers we have, as it seems to me, little need

of; knowing, as we do, by the list of those which are at Padua, that it is these alone which particularly regard the affair in question. I will do myself the honour to send you word, Sir, by the next post, what shall have been the issue of the interview between the Sieur de Lestang and Giuliani.

The Abbé d'Estrades, by his care and address, has found means to send to Pignerol the servant of the Sieur de Lestang, with his goods and all his papers. I have made an inventory of the latter; they consist in tables of cyphers, and letters, which I have docketed, and extracted the substance of; they are of no importance. I will send to you, Sir, by the next post, a copy of what I have extracted, and a short summary of what I have been able to learn from the Sieur de Lestang in the conversations that I have had with him; respecting which he tells me he has already sent information to the King, or to the Abbé d'Estrades, which has diminished the impatience I should otherwise have had of acquainting you, Sir, with them. M. de Saint-Mars treats the Sieur de Lestang very kindly in all that regards

cleanliness and food; but very rigorously in preventing him from holding intercourse with any one.

I am, with all respect, &c.

C.*

No. 86.

Inventory sent by Catinat to Louvois, of the Papers which Matthioli had about his person.

1. A Memorandum of what he had to do at Turin, at the place where he expected to receive letters from Carbonini.

2. A little note of the papers of consequence he has at Padua, among which are those which the King is desirous of having, and which the Sieur Giuliani is gone to take possession of.

3. A note of the road he was to take in his way to Casale.

* Catinat. This letter is extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

4. Another note, which states that he has sent four blank papers, signed by the Duke of Mantua, to the governor of Casale; also the dates of the departure from Venice of M. d'Asfeld, and of the day on which he, the Sieur de Lestang, and the Sieur d'Asfeld were to meet at Incréa.

5. A memorandum, to make him recollect the name of a man living at Placentia, to whom he owes five hundred livres.

6. A little memorandum, of the places where he had bought some small barrels of good wine, which he intended to make a present of to M. de Varengeville,* the new ambassador at Venice; and of his intention to write to the Governor of Navarre the news of what should happen in the affairs regarding Casale.

7. A note, stating that the Marquis de Rebouf can give intelligence to the King of what passes at Genoa; and his reasons to the Marquis de Cavetto for the pretensions to Savona.

8. Another, stating that the Duke of Mantua had taken poison on the 22d of February, at

* He had succeeded the Abbé d'Estrades as French Ambassador at Venice.

Venice, which was suspected to have been given him by an individual, named George Hacquet, a man about his person, and the minister of his pleasures.

9. Another memorandum, by which it appears that the Duke of Mantua received, on the 14th of January, 2,500 pistoles from his mother; and on the 10th of February, 3,000 pistoles from the Abbé Frederic, the resident of the Emperor at Venice; also containing an account of the communication which he, the Sieur de Lestang, has with the Governor of Casale.

10. Memorandum, by which it appears that he had an interview, on the 26th of April, near Moncalvo, with the Governor of Casale; that he told him he must return once again to Mantua, or to Venice, because he had written him word that he would come to him on Ascension day; that the aforesaid Governor was content with the expedients that he had proposed to him for the purpose of delivering the place to the King, by means of which his honour appeared to him to be saved; that for this purpose, at the return of the Sieur de Lestang, it was necessary there should be an interview be-

tween him, the Sieur de Lestang, the Governor, and some man on the part of the King, to execute this affair, and to agree upon means that should make it infallible; that he would deliver up the gate of the Citadel which goes into the country, to which Panissa, who is the Governor of it, would offer no opposition; that the Count Vialardo, Governor of the Castle, is entirely devoted to the Spaniards; that the Governor of Casale requests that this affair may be quickly concluded, fearing always lest he should be removed; that he (Lestang) will make known to the aforesaid Governor what he shall have done, when he is with the Duke of Mantua, through the Father Viveti, a Jacobin living at Padua; that he will continue to write to all the Courts that the affair of Casale has failed, and that it will not be completed.

11. A small piece of paper, about as large as a card, upon which he has written four or five reasons, to be inserted in the manifesto, when the troops of the King shall be introduced into Casale. Also a statement that all that has been done has been in virtue of the Duke's orders, grounded upon a treaty, signed and ratified by him; but that he (the Duke) now wished to make another

with the Spaniards, contrary to the promise he had given, and that he has even received money to that effect.*

No. 87.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

First Examination of Matthioli.

Pignerol, May 10th, 1679.

I have delivered to the Abbé d'Estrades, by the hands of his relation, the Abbé de Montesquiou, all the letters and papers of the Sieur de Lestang, which consisted in many letters, of which I have kept a list, containing shortly the subject of each letter. These letters only show his journeys backwards and forwards; there are some of them in which he is advised to take care of himself; one, among others, is from the Ministers of Mantua, informing him of the joy of the Duke at his prosperous return from France, and of his having sent

* From the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

a boat to Placentia for him, in order that he may come to him more securely and more conveniently. He had many other papers, among which I have seen nothing of consequence, except a Spanish cypher, which he confesses to have come from the Count de Melgar.*

I made him relate before me to the Abbé de Montesquiou, all that he had done since his return from France, without interrupting him; having nevertheless, let him know, before I permitted him to speak, that we were perfectly well informed of his villainy, in order to see what colour he would give to his bad conduct. He says, that on his return from France, he went to Turin, where, from gratitude to that court, which had done him the honour of making use of him in many affairs, he thought himself obliged, on account of civility, to see the President Turki;† that it was true, in talking of news and of the state of affairs at present, he allowed him to discover that something new was about to take place in Italy; and that the afore-

* The Governor of Milan.

† One of the ministers of Mary Jane Baptista of Nemours, Duchess of Savoy; he was in the interests of the House of Austria.

said President, in the course of the conversation he had with him, gave him to understand that he had no doubt there had been a treaty made respecting Casale. It is thus that the Sieur de Lestang relates what he did at Turin, in order to excuse his treachery there, of which you, Sir, are already perfectly well informed, as well as of the money he received for it. This was the first discovery that had been made of this affair, which hitherto had been conducted so secretly.

From Turin he went by Placentia, to Mantua, to join his master, whom he found still well-intentioned for the completion of the affair. Even two days after his return, having fallen ill, the Duke of Mantua came to see him; and he took this occasion to make him sign the ratification, and to write a letter to the Governor of Casale, in which he recommended him to do all that should be told him by the Sieur de Lestang. Another letter, in form of a command, was written to the aforesaid Governor, to receive the troops of the King; in a word, he was provided at this moment with all things necessary for the entire conclusion of this affair. A few days afterwards, he was informed that his master had changed his resolution; and that it was

even his intention to take out of his hands all that he had done and signed, which could render the treaty valid. That the Duke of Mantua began by saying that nothing had been done in this business with his participation; and that he disavowed entirely all that he, the Sieur de Lestang, had done. This prince could not then do otherwise, the Spaniards and his mother being so particularly informed of this transaction, that they showed him exact copies of the whole treaty. (These they had acquired, either by a second piece of treachery of the Sieur de Lestang, or through the court of Savoy.) The Sieur de Lestang says, that, under divers pretexts, he always eluded giving up the originals to the Duke of Mantua, in order that he might himself remain master of the affair; and that he had not despaired of being able to complete it, by contriving expedients to enable him to surmount the obstacles that had occurred; as well as through the intelligence that existed between him and the Governor of Casale.

He says, that the Spaniards, knowing he was master of these papers, had made him considerable offers in order to obtain them. That the Spaniards being so well informed, he thought it neces-

sary to make a false confidence to them on the subject, in order to amuse them, by telling them that the affair had entirely failed; hoping, by this confidence, to diminish their suspicions, and the precautions they might have taken to prevent his profiting by the advantages which his intelligence with the Governor of Casale gave him for the conclusion of the business. That he even took this cypher, of which I have before spoken, from M. de Melgar, in order to make this false confidence the more credible to him. Thus it is that this rascal pretends to escape the accusation that has been made against him on account of the Spanish cypher, which has been found in his possession.

He has told us positively, that the Duke of Mantua was poisoned at the house of an individual named Le Romain, at Venice, where he went to drink iced water; that the deed was done by the Spaniards, and the poison administered by one of his own domestics; that this Prince could not live more than three or four months. He says that he learnt this from the Spaniards, with whom he kept up a communication, for the purpose of amusing them.

In the midst of these events, he says that he agreed upon the rendezvous of Incréa, where he

was to meet d'Asfeld, on the 7th March, for the exchange of the ratifications; after which he did not doubt but he should be able to conclude the affair, having all the orders necessary, besides his intelligence with the Governor, so that he could not have found any obstacle, nor any difficulty; that in going to the before-mentioned Incréa, he had been searched and robbed, on the frontiers of the Brescian and the Milanese; that, notwithstanding, having remained master of his papers, which were concealed in a saddle, he had afterwards continued his journey as far as Buffacore, where the arrest of d'Asfeld was confirmed to him in a manner he could no longer doubt; that M. de Villars, who was still Ambassador at Turin, having no knowledge of this affair, and being doubtful himself, whether, if he came to Pignerol, I* should place confidence in him, he took the resolution of going back to Venice, to inform M. de Pinchesne of all that had happened, and to concert new measures with him; that upon a simple letter of the Abbé d'Estrades, who sent him word it was necessary they should have an interview, he had not lost a moment of time in going to Turin; that with the

* Catinat.

consent of the aforesaid Abbé d'Estrades, he had been at Asti, for the purpose of managing a secret interview with the Governor of Casale, at a mile from Moncalvo, in order, by promising him great recompenses, to engage him to receive the troops, when, for the saving of his honour, he should have received an order from his master, and been shown that he had made a treaty with the King. He says that he left him in a very good disposition. That afterwards he returned to Turin, where the Abbé d'Estrades proposed to him an interview with me, in which I arrested him.

This, Sir, is the simple and true recital of what the Sieur de Lestang has told me, which confirms me in the belief that he is a thorough rascal; not having been able to give me any good reason why he discovered this affair to the President Turki, when he passed through Turin; or why he concealed from M. de Pinchesne his communication with the Spaniards, his acceptation of their cypher, and his interviews with an Inquisitor of State at Venice; if, as he says, he only did these things in order the better to advance the affair in question.

I have made him write three letters for the purpose of getting possession of the original papers

which are at Padua, which have been put into the hands of the Sieur Giuliani, by the advice of the Abbé d'Estrades, who places an entire confidence in him: he will make use of these three letters as he shall judge most fit, according to the disposition in which he shall find the father of the Sieur de Lestang. The first is only a letter of the Sieur de Lestang to his father, in which he acquaints him, that there are reasons which oblige him to remain at Turin, or in the neighbourhood, but that he may place an entire confidence in the Sieur Giuliani, and deliver to him such and such papers, of which I have made him give the inventory to the Sieur Giuliani. The second acquaints his father with the real state in which he is, and that it is important, as well for his life as his honour, that his papers should be immediately delivered into the hands of the Sieur Giuliani. In the third, which is the last to be made use of, in case the two first have no effect, he desires him to come to Turin; and tells him that at the house of the Abbé d'Estrades he will be instructed where he is, and the means to be employed to speak with him. The Sieur de Lestang has no doubt of being able, in this interview between him and his father, to persuade him to all

he may wish. I have inspired him with so great a fear of the punishments due to his bad conduct, that I find no repugnance in him to do all that I require of him, and he appears sincere in the wish of obtaining the delivery of the papers, which will be sent to M. de Pinchesne at Venice, in order to avoid any accidents that might happen to them in so long a journey as that from Padua to this place, or to Turin.

I place no confidence in what this rascal tells me; nevertheless I think it right to inform you, Sir, that he declares positively that the Governor of Casale is his friend, and that, by promising him a considerable recompense, and by furnishing him with a pretext to save his honour, which may be done by giving him the order of his master (which the Sieur de Lestang says is at Padua) to receive the King's troops, we can make him do whatever we wish. That he can deliver up the town, and that the Governor of the citadel is his intimate friend, whom he can persuade to do whatever he shall order him. As for the castle, which I saw when I was passing through Casale, it is rather a sort of little citadel than a simple castle. The Sieur de Lestang says, that assuredly the governor

of it will not submit himself to the orders of the Governor of Casale, although the latter has the command over him, because the aforesaid governor, whose name is Vialardo, is entirely devoted to the Spaniards; that this is a thing which he has heard from the Spaniards themselves; and that on the least change at Casale, or the march of troops towards it, the Governors of Valenza, Novara, and Pavia, have orders to send detachments of their garrisons to the aforesaid Casale, and that they will be infallibly let into the place through the castle. This Vialardo is brother of a secretary of the Duke of Mantua, who bears the same name, and who is also entirely in the Spanish faction.

However, when we shall have obtained possession of the papers, it is not impossible but we may be able to contrive something with the Governor of Casale, if he is in those sentiments that the Sieur de Lestang ascribes to him, and if he is the master to receive troops in the town and citadel. This affair, if conducted very secretly, and with the rapid march of a regiment or two of dragoons, might take the Spaniards so much by surprise, that they might not have any sufficient means in their power to be able to counteract it. If we

were masters of the town and citadel, and had as large a number of troops as that which was destined to the execution of this affair, I am certain that the castle could not prevent any resolutions that we might wish to take. We might receive upon this subject important intelligence from an interview with the Governor of Casale. The difficulty is how to contrive it so as to discover his intentions, without the negociations passing through the hands of our rascal, in whom we cannot place any reliance. But, when we have the papers, if this affair was despaired of as far as regards the Duke of Mantua, and that the King thought that the plan I send to you, Sir, was worth trying, I would concert what was to be done with the Abbé d'Estrades, according to the orders I should receive upon the subject. I beg pardon, Sir, for troubling you with so long a letter; but I could not acquaint you in fewer words with the conduct of the Sieur de Lestang, and with what has passed between him and me.

I am,

With all the respect which is due to you, &c.

C.*

* Catinat. From the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

No. 88.

POMPONNE TO PINCHESNE.

St. Germain, May 10, 1679.

Your letter, Sir, of the 22d of last month serves still more to confirm the treachery of the Count Matthioli, of which we had even before had too many proofs. He was, in fact, arrived in Piedmont, and had seen the Abbé d'Estrades. It is impossible to conceive the insolence of his daring to show himself, at a moment when all Italy rings with his perfidy. However, it is to be wished that he should deliver up the ratification of the Duke of Mantua, if it is true, as that Prince states, that he has still got it in his hands. If the Sieur Tarani* has more fidelity than him, it would be desirable he should have the confidence of his master, and should dispose him to satisfy his Majesty, by showing him that it is dangerous to break promises which have been so solemnly made to him. * * * *

I am, &c.

POMPONNE.†

* This probably is a mistake for Varano, whose name has been frequently mentioned in the former part of this correspondence.

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 89.

PINCHESNE TO POMPONNE.

nterviews between the Duke of Mantua and the Senator Foscarini.

Venice, May 13th, 1679.

SIR,

I beseech you very humbly to be persuaded taht I will not fail to execute, with all the exactitude and zeal possible, the orders which it has pleased you to give me, (in the letter which you have done me the honour to write to me on the 26th of last month,) to inform you of all that shall come to my knowledge respecting the affair of Casale, and on the subject of the Count Matthioli. The annoyance I had, at not being able to discover what brought the Duke of Mantua to Venice, the last time when, as I sent you word, he came there, obliged me to redouble my endeavours to try and learn something upon the subject; and at last they have not been in vain, since I know at present, so certainly that I cannot doubt of it, that this Prince had, during that time, two long conversations, in the Convent of the Capuchins, with M. Foscarini, a sage and a grandee, who is the person named by the Republic to continue the

history which the Procurator Nani was about, and who is one of the most able men of this state: in which this senator represented to him very strongly how dangerous it would be for him and for all Italy if he gave up Casale to the King, as it was said he had the intention to do, and had even made a treaty for that purpose with his Majesty, and that the Republic hoped he would not take a step so prejudicial to all the princes of Italy; to which I know that the Duke of Mantua answered, that he knew his own interests, and that assuredly he would never voluntarily give up Casale to the King; but that his Majesty was the most powerful Prince in Europe, and in a condition to attempt every thing, without its being easy to prevent him; that it would be therefore necessary to seek for the most proper means to do this, which, however, could not be hoped for, without having considerable troops to oppose to his, in case he wished to attempt some enterprise; that of himself he was not sufficiently powerful to resist his Majesty; that it was for those, who had as much interest as himself in the preservation of that place, to find the means of preserving it, without which he would not answer for what might happen; and that

the fault even could not be attributed to him, but to his bad fortune and to his want of aid.

I know, besides, that the ministers of the Republic consider it certain that Casale is to be attacked by the King, and that they say they have this intelligence from such good authority, that they cannot doubt of it.

* * * * * *

I cannot, Sir, refrain from testifying to you the joy I felt in learning this week, by a letter of the Abbé d'Estrades, that the Count Matthioli has been carried prisoner to Pignerol, and that thus this rogue will no more be in a condition to execute, every day, fresh perfidies.

I am, with the most respectful submission, and all the attachment possible,

Sir,

Your very humble and very obedient Servant,

DE PINCHESNE.†

† From the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 90.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Orders to treat Matthioli with severity.

St. Germain, May 15th, 1679.

I have received your letter of the 6th of this month, which requires no answer, except to say that you will have sufficiently seen by my former letters, that it is not the intention of the King that the Sieur de Lestang should be well-treated, nor that, except the absolute necessaries of life, you should give him any thing that may make him pass his time agreeably.

I address to you a packet of importance for M. de Richemont, which I beg of you to give into his own hands, and to tell the Commissary du Channoy, not to send away the courier who carries him this, until you shall have given him the answers he is to bring back.

De Louvois.*

* From the Archives of France.

No. 91.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Plans of Catinat for obtaining possession of Casale.

Pignerol, May 16th, 1679.

I send you, Sir, the second examination of M. Matthioli, according to the order which I received to that effect, by the extraordinary courier you sent to this place. You will find it little different from the first. I put him into the greatest possible fear of the torture, if he did not tell the truth. One sees very well by his answers that his conduct has been infamous. I see no good reason which can excuse him for having had such intimate communication with the Court of Savoy, with the Abbé Frederic (the resident of the Emperor at Venice), and with Don Francis Visconti, one of the partizans of Spain, without any participation or correspondence upon the subject with M. de Pomponne, the Abbé d'Estrades, or M. de Pinchesne; this fact prevents my having any confidence in him. Nevertheless he persists, with the utmost obstinacy, in declaring, that the Go-

vernor of Casale is well-intentioned; that this Govenor sees very well that the Duke of Mantua is a lost man; that he sees also that there cannot happen any change in the Court of Mantua, without his being removed from Casale; and that he is a man who would be accessible to any offers that might be made him; this is what he, Matthioli, is willing to stake his life upon; that if he is furnished with a specious excuse for receiving the troops of the King, he will assuredly do it, which will be easy, when we have the original papers which his father is to deliver into the hands of Giuliani; that provided the Governor is not absent from Casale, he, Matthioli, will find means to contrive an interview between this Governor, me, and himself; and that I shall both see and understand the means of rendering the King master of Casale. As I know beforehand that I am conversing with a rascal, and that it is almost of necessity, if his propositions are adopted, that he should himself be again employed in this affair, I cannot bring myself to answer for him in any thing; nevertheless I have thought it right to communicate all this, Sir, to you. When the King once has possession of the papers, my hav-

ing an interview with this Governor is a step that would not hazard any thing; I do not see any inconvenience in it, except the chance of the Sieur Matthioli's escaping, on account of the degree of liberty which must in that case be permitted to him, however vigilant I might be in watching him. I should be obliged to go with him to Asti, where he is acquainted with a Dominican monk, who would carry to Moncalvo a note to a physician whose name is Viveti; this Viveti would go to Casale to inform the Governor of the place of rendezvous, which had been settled for our interview with him. But it is almost impossible in all these proceedings to answer for the person of Matthioli: as there is, therefore, this inconvenience in the plan, the Abbé d'Estrades could, if it is the King's wish that any proposition should be made to this Governor, according to the orders he should receive, have him spoken to, and his intentions sounded by some one. I beseech you, Sir, to be persuaded that in this affair I place my own interest beneath my feet, and that I only venture to make you proposals upon the subject, from the desire I have that the affair should succeed to the satisfaction of the King.

* * * * *

As the papers which are at Padua are to be sent, at least I believe so, to M. de Pinchesne, in order to avoid any accidents that might happen to them by bringing them straight to this place or to Turin, I will take measures to set off from hence as soon as I shall know they are delivered to M. de Pinchesne. As you, Sir, may perhaps wish to send me word of any new determinations that may have been come to with regard to this affair, in consequence of which I might be of some utility here, I take the liberty of informing you, that I shall remain at Pignerol till the 9th or 10th of June. If you do not honour me with any order between this time and then, I shall execute that you have already given me of returning to France. I should be obliged to you to let me know where I am to go, whether straight to the Court, or to Dunkirk, where my company is, or to any other place where it shall please you to order me. I shall take great precautions to conceal myself, and not to appear before the relations of Messrs. Fouquet and Lauzun.* I cannot, however, answer

* Fouquet and Lauzun were at this time still prisoners at Pignerol. The former died in 1680, and the latter was released from his confinement the same year.

for it, Sir, that they will not write word of my being here. I did not take any measures for the Ambassador's being present at this last examination, because I had been before particularly informed by him of all the proofs there were against Matthioli.

I am with all the respect, &c.

C.*

No. 92.

Second Examination of Matthioli.

The Count Matthioli being asked what happened to him when he passed through Turin, replied, that he had been to visit the Marquis of Saint-Thomas; that as he was ill, he could not see him; that afterwards he went to the President Turki, whom he found full of suspicions respecting his journey into France; and that as he is an insinuating and adroit man, he engaged him insensibly to talk of the affairs of the Duke of Mantua and of Casale; that it is true, that being taken by surprise by the ingenuity and cunning of the

* Catinat. This letter is extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

aforesaid President, and by the affection which he pretended to show for the interests of France, he confided so much in the aforesaid President, that it was impossible for him to doubt but that there was some treaty made respecting Casale; that it is true, that he received two thousand livres from that Court,* but that it was rather as a mark of gratitude for some services he had formerly had the honour of performing for it, than as a recompense for any thing he then confided.

He says that the President Turki begged him, when he left Turin, to write to him carefully all the progress of this affair; that he, the President, had written to him several times after this to Venice, asking for intelligence upon the subject; to which he had always answered that the affair would not take place, in order to diminish the opinion he might have had, from his former answers to him, of there being a treaty respecting that place.

Being asked where he went from Turin, he replied, that he took the road to Placentia, where he found letters from Don Nevani and Cabriani,†

* Of Turin.

† Two of the Ministers of the Duke of Mantua.

which were only to testify their joy at his return, and to tell him that the Duke of Mantua waited for him with impatience, and that they had sent a boat to meet him, in order that he might be able to embark upon the Po.

From Placentia he went straight to Mantua, where he found the Duke of Mantua; who, the very day of his arrival, took the trouble of coming to see him at his own house, where he was lying down, being very ill; this interview was passed in civilities respecting his malady. Two days afterwards he came again to see him, and asked him for a copy of all that he had done in France, which he gave him very exactly, but with great pain to himself, on account of his illness. That same day he made the Duke sign all the papers necessary for the entire completion of the treaty, as far as regarded the form. Three or four days afterwards, having received intelligence from the Sieur Carbonini, that there was a plan to poison him, and having even perceived that they had put poison into a medicine, which he had pretended to take, but had found the means of throwing away, he had taken the resolution, under the pretext of recovering his health, of going to Padua,

whither he had taken all the original papers with him.

On the 24th or 25th of January, the Duke of Mantua, in his way to Venice, passed through Padua; where he went to see the Sieur Matthioli, who was ill, and where he told the Sieur Matthioli, that he had not been able to avoid talking of this affair to his Mother, and that it was an affair which means must be found to break off, because it was not for his advantage. To which, the aforesaid Matthioli answered several things, and among others, that he had again written quite lately to the court to say that all was signed; and that these were the sort of engagements that it was not easy to get released from. The Duke of Mantua afterwards asked him for the original papers, to which he replied that they were locked up, and that it would be a great inconvenience to him, being as ill as he was, to go and look for them; but that he would come as soon as he was able to Venice, where he would deliver the whole into his hands.

He says that the Sieur Giuliani came to see him at Padua from the Duke of Mantua, to give him intelligence that the Inquisitors of State at Venice

were making search for him, and that he must take his measures accordingly, in order not to be seized with the papers; which obliged him to mix them with many others, and to place them in a separate house from the one he lived in.

After having been three weeks at Padua, he set off for Venice, leaving the original papers, and not taking them with him. He arrived ill at Venice; went to bed as soon as he arrived there, where he remained three days; afterwards he went to see the Duke of Mantua, who told him that the Abbé Frederic, the Resident of the Emperor at Venice, was acquainted with all the affair respecting Casale; to which the aforesaid Matthioli answered that he was not surprised at it, and that assuredly his Mother, to whom he had told all himself, had had no reserve upon the subject with the aforesaid Abbé Frederic. He asked him afterwards for the original papers, which he told him he could not give him, having left them at Padua, upon the advice which Giuliani had given him from *him*, to take care that the Venetians, who were looking out for him, should not find them in his possession. The Duke of Mantua told him that it was absolutely necessary to break off this affair; to which

he answered that he ought to take care how he behaved with regard to the King; that he had entered into engagements from which he could not extricate himself without breaking his word, which would be very dangerous to do with so powerful a Prince. The Duke of Mantua obliged him afterwards to have an interview with him and the Abbé Frederic, which took place in the chamber of a Monk of Saint George; they were masked there, in order not to be known. The Duke of Mantua said to the Sieur Matthioli, "I leave you with the Abbé Frederic, with whom you will hold a conversation; you must do all that he shall bid you." The aforesaid Abbé Frederic, showed him a copy of the treaty; and appeared so particularly instructed upon the subject, that there was no possibility of his denying it. The aforesaid Abbé told him that it was an affair which must be broken off; that it would be the ruin of Italy and of his master also, and that it was absolutely necessary to think of some means which would make it certain not to happen; and that he might expect a great deal of gratitude from the House of Austria, if he conducted himself well. He confesses that he appeared to enter into his sentiments, not being able to do otherwise; but

that remaining master of the original papers, he thought he should be always able to complete the affair, which he intended to do in this manner.

The Governor of Casale being his friend, he did not doubt but that he should be able to make him do all that he wished. To this end, he made a packet of the four blank papers signed by the Duke of Mantua, which he had made him sign at Mantua when he first arrived there, and while this Prince was still well-intentioned. That in order to inspire more confidence to the Governor of Casale, that he, the Sieur Matthioli, would do nothing, except with the order of his master, he had had this packet addressed to him by another Secretary of the Duke of Mantua, named Magnus, who has for his department the management of the affairs of the Montferrat, to whom he said, "Here is a packet which his Highness has told me to send to Casale: as you administer the affairs of that country, write a letter to the Governor, ordering him to execute all that is to be enjoined by this packet." That this proceeding procured for him the entire confidence of the Governor, by making him see that he would not ask any thing of him which he could not execute with honour; that he

had made d'Asfeld set off from Venice two or three days afterwards, in order to arrive about the same time with him at Incréa, where he intended to have taken all the necessary measures with the aforesaid Governor, for the completion of the affair.

Being asked why he had acted in this indirect manner, (since it had been agreed in the interview which he, M. de Pinchesne, and M. d'Asfeld had had together on the 24th of February, that the Duke of Mantua should go to Casale on the 15th of March, which was a decided mark of the good intentions of his Master), he replied, that his Master was truly well-intentioned, from the fear he had inspired him with of the King's resentment; but that knowing the natural uncertainty of his disposition, he had thought it right to take measures to enable him to complete the affair, even in case he (the Duke) had not kept to his engagement of coming to Casale. Being asked why he did not confide this to the Sieurs de Pinchesne and d'Asfeld, he said that he did not wish to discover to them the intelligence that existed between him and the Governor, or to give them any idea of uncertainty in this affair, which might perhaps have made them suspend the

execution of it; that as he himself regarded it as the means of making his fortune, if he could bring it to a conclusion, and as he did not doubt that such would be the event, from the measures he had taken, he wished to avoid all that might retard the execution of it. That the Sieur de Pinchesne can say whether he, the Sieur Matthioli, did not always answer to him for the success of the affair, without, however, being ever willing to communicate to him the means to be employed in it.

Being asked whether he did not speak of the affair of Casale with certain Venetians, he answered that they were so well-informed upon the subject, that it is very likely he may have conversed with some of them upon it, but in the way of telling them that it was an affair which was broken off, and had failed; that he had seen the Chevalier Cornaro, Inquisitor of State, only once, for the purpose of asking his permission to carry arms, as the Duke of Mantua wished to have him assassinated, in order the better to authorize his disavowal of all that he, the Sieur Matthioli, had done in France, which was certainly a very unjust reason on the part of his Master for wishing to have him killed; that as he was of a fickle disposition, his senti-

ments would change upon this subject as upon every thing else; and that by making use of precautions for some time, he should escape this misfortune: this permission was promised, but was never given to him.

Being asked whether he had not conversed at Venice with some one of the partisans of Spain, he answered, no; that he left that place on the 28th of February, two days after M. d'Asfeld, to go to Incréa.

Being asked whether he had not known beforehand, that the Sieur d'Asfeld was to be arrested, he answered that he had had no knowledge of it, and that he had even only known with certainty his detention at Buffacore, as far as which place he had gone on his road to the rendezvous at Incréa, having with him all the papers necessary for the conclusion of the affair of Casale, which he had concealed so well in a saddle, that they were not found, though he was very minutely searched upon the frontiers of the Brescian and the Milanese; that from Buffacore he returned straight to Venice, not having any doubt of the arrest of d'Asfeld, from the news he had received respecting it; that he only remained there two days, in

order to inform M. de Pinchesne of the accidents that had happened.

Being asked whether he conversed with other persons at Venice, he answered, no.

When he left Venice he returned to Padua, where he remained always, except some short visits to Venice, of a day at the longest, to confer with M. de Pinchesne.

Being asked if, at Padua, he had not held intercourse with some one of the partisans of Spain; he answered, yes; with the individual named Don Francis Visconti, natural son of the Count Visconti, Commissary-General of the Milanese, who had spoken to him on the part of his father and of the Count de Melgar, and who having in his possession a copy of the treaty, and being perfectly instructed of the whole transaction, it was not possible for him to deny it; but he spoke of it as an affair that had failed, and gained the confidence of the aforesaid Francis, who offered him a thousand pistoles, and a fief in the Milanese, if he would deliver to M. de Melgar the original papers which were in his possession. He answered him, that this affair having appeared to him to have failed, he had given them to M. de Pin-

chesne, and was no longer master of them. The aforesaid Francis persuaded him to enter into communication with M. de Melgar, in order, for the future, to prevent the execution of this affair, and took measures with him, about the 10th or 12th of March, for acquainting M. de Melgar with every thing; and to this end agreed with him upon the Spanish cypher found among his papers. He says that he did all this only to deceive them, and to prevent their taking other means, than through him, of being informed of the resolutions of the King in this affair.

Being asked whether he did not know, through the means of Francis, of the arrest of d'Asfeld, he answered, yes, and that the aforesaid Francis told him he had been arrested at Canonica, twenty-five miles from Milan, on the side of Bergamo, and that they had been waiting for him there more than a fortnight.

Being asked if he knew who were the people that arrested him, he answered, that he did not know precisely, but that Don Francis had told him they were people employed by M. de Melgar, and that they had been placed upon various routes in order not to miss him. Don Francis told him

besides, that he was a prisoner in the castle of Milan; that he was very civilly treated there; and that he had not been interrogated, nor found charged with any papers.

Being asked whether he had not given any body a copy of the treaty; he swore distinctly that he had given it to no one, and that those copies which have got about could only have come from the mother of the Duke of Mantua, to whom her son had confided the whole affair.

He came from Padua to Turin, upon receiving the letter of the Abbé d'Estrades, in order to contrive an interview with the Governor of Casale; which he had done, and had found the Governor well inclined to contribute to the completion of the business. From thence he returned to Turin, where the Abbé d'Estrades persuaded him to have an interview with me, during which I arrested him. I send this last fact to you, Sir, shortly, because I have already given you a sufficiently exact detail respecting it.*

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

No. 93.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, May 20th, 1679.

Your letter of the 10th of this month has been delivered to me; I have nothing to add to what I have already commanded you respecting the severity with which the individual named Lestang must be treated.

With regard to the man who conducted M. de Richemont into Piedmont, you may let him go, after having recompensed him sufficiently, taking care to let me know what you have given him.

De Louvois.*

No. 94.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Further particulars respecting Matthioli.

Pignerol, May 21st, 1679.

I only send you, Sir, the answers which the Sieur Lestang has made to me upon the points, on

* From the Archives of France.

which you have ordered me to interrogate him; the preceding examinations, which I took the liberty of sending you, having already informed you upon other subjects, and generally upon every thing which I have been able to learn from the aforesaid Sieur de Lestang. He is a man whose conduct has been so infamous, that one cannot answer for the truth of any thing he says; nevertheless, I believe him to be sincere in the desire he shows that the original papers should be in the King's possession. He sees very well, that he has only this way of getting out of the affair. I have already, Sir, made you acquainted with the means we are making use of to obtain them. I am also persuaded that he has had intimate communications with the Governor of Casale; perhaps, though, the detention of the Sieur de Lestang may have changed the dispositions of the latter. The Sieur de Lestang has told me, that at their last interview near Moncalvo, the aforesaid Governor pressed him to conclude this affair, saying, that any delay in the execution of it was dangerous; that the four blank papers signed, which he had sent him, were sufficient, if they were filled up with what was necessary, so that he might appear to act

according to orders; that it was also necessary to let him have an interview with some confidential man on the part of the King, with whom he might agree upon every thing; he told him even that the civilities he had shown me when I was at Casale, were only because he thought I was a man employed in this affair, although I called myself an officer going to Vercelli, and that for the chance of this, he was determined to treat me with great distinction. Lestang has told me that he related all this to the Abbé d'Estrades. I have asked him why, as the Governor was so well-intentioned, he, Lestang, had eluded a prompt execution, when it was proposed to him? He answers to this, that he had engaged himself by letter to the Duke of Mantua to be at Venice on Ascension-day, where he still hoped to have sufficient influence over him to extract from him a last consent. That he should immediately after this have brought back the original papers, and that having already taken his measures with the Governors of the town and of the citadel, the execution of the affair would not have had to encounter any farther difficulty; that Vialardo, Governor of the castle, being of the Spanish faction, might have been a

small obstacle, but not to signify, when the town and the citadel should have been in our possession. I send you, Sir, all that this man has told me, without being answerable for the truth of it. I shall set off the 2d of next month, as I have already done myself the honour of acquainting you, Sir, if between this time and then, I hear that the papers have been delivered to M. de Pinchesne.

I am, with all the respect, &c.

(Signed) C.*

No. 95.

Third Examination of Matthioli.

May 21st, 1679.

Being asked whether at his return from France he had not seen the president Turki; he answered, that it is true he had told him there was a treaty respecting Casale, and that he had even told him the conditions of it, but that he could not have given him an exact copy of it, because he had not his papers with him, having

* Catinat. This letter is extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

sent them from Lyons to Placentia, addressed to one of his friends named M. Rigueti-Cannevavi, Chancellor-general of the posts, in order to avoid having them with him in his journey through Italy.

Being asked why he made this confidence to the President Turki; he answered, that he had known the President for four or five years; and that in the course of conversation, from indiscretion and quick talking, he had allowed himself to tell too much.

Being asked what the aforesaid President said to him, when he had told him that there was a treaty respecting Casale; he answered, that M. Turki explained to him that it would disturb the whole of Italy, and that it would cause a war there; that the aforesaid President gave him several good reasons for this.

Being asked why he, who had the honour of being the head of so great and important a negociation, had commenced it with the intention of preventing the execution of it, as he had said at Turin; he answered, that this was never his design; that it was very true that he had said to the President Turki, that there was no appear-

ance of this treaty being executed, because it depended upon the peace, and that if the war was at an end, he was persuaded they should never manage to arrive at the execution of it. The aforesaid President upon this told him, that peace would certainly be made; but that, if under any circumstances a change was to take place at Casale, he would rather prefer that the French should be the masters of it than the Spaniards.

Being asked why he wrote so regularly from Venice and from Padua, upon the subject of this affair, to the aforesaid President; he answered, that the aforesaid President begged him, when he left Turin, to do so, and to acquaint him exactly with all that should be done in relation to this affair; that in pursuance of the promise he had made him to that effect, he had always sent him accounts of it, but written in the sense as if it would not take place, the peace being at present concluded, and the affair of Guastalla being settled, which was one of the most powerful motives that had urged the Duke of Mantua to put himself under the protection of the King. That he persuaded the aforesaid President that this affair would not take place, in order that the intelligence he gave him

might agree with what he told the Duke of Mantua himself, and the Abbé Frederic, resident of the Emperor at Venice; and that he encouraged this opinion in the mind of every body, the better to arrive at his ends, and to succeed in the plan he had of introducing the troops of the King into Casale, through the means of his intelligence with the Governor. That this intention never quitted him for a moment, and that what now was considered as his crime, would appear a most able contrivance, if the whole of this affair was ever thoroughly known. That his obstinacy in keeping possession of the original papers, and his understanding with the Governor of Casale, are proofs of the truth of this; that if he had not had a well-grounded intention of serving the King, he should not have taken such care of these papers, the retaining of which brought upon him the indignation of his master, and even put his life into great jeopardy; and that his secret intelligence with the Governor was perfectly useless to him, unless his intentions were true and faithful.

Being asked what were the contents of the letters he received from the President; he answered, that he had received one among others, in which

the aforesaid President wrote him word that he was sure he was deceiving him, by always telling him that the affair of Casale would not take place; because of the arrival of troops in the quarters behind Pignerol, which could only be for the affair of Casale.

Being asked whether the President Turki had not shown to him a desire that this affair should fail; he answered, no; that he had always conversed upon it without delivering an opinion, at the same time showing a great deal of curiosity to be informed exactly of all that might happen relating to this affair.

Being asked whether he had seen the Marquis of Saint-Maurice; he answered, no.

Being asked through whom the Court of Savoy could have received such particular information; he answered, that it must have been through the Count of Juvenasque, the Resident from Spain at that Court, who has a great deal of intercourse with the Monk Bulgarini; and that the aforesaid Bulgarini had known every thing from the mother of the Duke of Mantua.

Being asked why he had acquainted the Count Hercules Visconti of the departure from Venice

of the Sieur d'Asfeld; he answered, that he had had no intercourse with him, till his return from Buffacore to Padua, after the arrest of the Sieur d'Asfeld, when Don Francis, the natural son of the Count Hercules Visconti, saw him, and held intercourse with him; which he had confessed to in his first examinations.

Being asked whether the original papers were at Padua, he answered affirmatively, yes; and that it is his real intention they should be delivered up to the King, as he sees this is the only means of atoning for his conduct.

Being asked whether on his arrival at Turin, he had not asked the President Turki to be allowed to speak to *Madame Royale*,* as he had affairs of great consequence to communicate to her; he answered, no; and that he had neither desired, nor asked to speak to any one, except the aforesaid President.

Being asked whether he had not written to *Madame Royale* from Padua, to request that she would send him a man to whom he could confide the real state of things, he answered readily, no;

* The Duchess Regent of Savoy.—See Note, Page 32.

but that he would tell it as freely, if it had been the case, as he had avowed that he had always held communication upon the subject of this affair with the President Turki, from his wish to deceive him, by sending him word that it would not succeed.

His answers elude, but do not deny all that has been said of him. In order to account for the communications he has held, he makes use of the continual pretext, that he was obliged to hold them, in order to deceive, and to obtain the success of the affair by taking the other side by surprise; making use, as the means of this surprise, of his intelligences with the Governor.*

No. 96.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, May 22d, 1679.

I have received your last letter without a date. You must keep the individual named Lestang in the severe confinement I enjoined in my preceding

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

letters, without allowing him to see a physician, unless you know he is in absolute want of one.

One cannot but approve of your plan for preventing the Sieur de Pressigny from being aware of the residence at Pignerol of M. de Richemont, to whom I beg you to deliver the letter I send with this.

De Louvois.*

No. 97.

CATINAT TO LOUVOIS.

Concluding examination of Matthioli.

Pignerol, June 3d, 1679.

Sir,

The original papers have been delivered to Giuliani, who has taken them to Venice to M. de Pinchesne: they consist of the treaty which the aforesaid Lestang had made with the Court, which is signed by him and by M. de Pomponne: an instruction which was given to the aforesaid Les-

* From the Archives of France.

tang, when he left the Court: the full power given to M. de Pomponne to treat with him, which is signed by you: and a letter from his Majesty to the Duke of Mantua. All these papers were in a box which had been placed in the Convent of Capuchins. Giuliani performed his duty very well, and so completely persuaded the father of the aforesaid Lestang, that the papers were delivered into his hands with all confidence. The ratification of the Duke of Mantua is not to be found, although the Sieur de Lestang said it was among them: whereupon I interrogated him; having first obtained all the advantage over him I could, by abusing him, and bringing soldiers into his room, as if preparatory to administering the question to him, which made him so much afraid, that he promised really to tell the truth. Being asked whether the Duke of Mantua had ratified the treaty; he answered that he had never subscribed to all the articles, but that he had got from him four blank papers signed, one of which was a blank paper of two sheets, at the top of which he had written: *Ratification of the treaty made with his most Christian Majesty.* That there were three other blank papers signed, of one sheet each, of

which he intended to make use to write in the name of his master to the three Governors, of the town, citadel, and castle, to order them to receive the King's troops. Being asked where these blank papers signed are at present, he answered, that they are in the hands of the Governor of Casale, to whom he sent them at the time that d'Asfeld left Venice. Being asked why he had sent them, without their being filled up, to the Governor of Casale; he answered, he had sent them to him in a letter of Magnus, the Secretary of the Duke of Mantua, in which the Governor was ordered to do without hesitation, all that should be told him, regarding the execution of the orders contained in that packet,—that they were left blank, because he wished to make the ratification according to that of the King, not knowing, as he says, exactly the form in which it ought to have been made out. Being asked why in his first examination he had said that this ratification was at Padua; he answered, that he had not wished to tell where it was before Giuliani, in order not to make him acquainted in any way with his intelligence with the Governor: he added that he had never had any other ratification except that one; and that whatever tor-

tures should be inflicted on him, he could never tell any thing more. He has not told me any thing new relating to the imprisonment of d'Asfeld, and he says that he has no farther knowledge of it than what I have already, Sir, sent word of to you.

I have taken leave of the Abbé d'Estrades, as we were both agreed respecting my inutility here at present. I shall, therefore, set off the 6th, to come to the Court, as you, Sir, have ordered me; where I shall have the honour of testifying to you my lively gratitude for the favours, which your protection has gained for me; and for the kindness with which you acquainted me with the last you had procured for me.

I am,

With all the respect that is due to you,

Sir,

Your very humble, &c.

C.*

* Catinat. This letter is extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

No. 98.

VARENGEVILLE TO POMPONNE.

Proposed Recompense to Giuliani.

Venice, July 1, 1679.

SIR,

In answer to the letter which you were pleased to write to me on the 14th of last month, I shall do myself the honour to tell you that, although I am aware that Giuliani has performed services which have been useful to the King, and that I am persuaded of his fidelity, and of his good inclinations towards France, which may render him still very useful for the future, I cannot forbear representing to you, that the recompense which the Abbé d'Estrades wished to procure for him, is not a fitting one; and I feel myself the more obliged to say this, because you do me the honour to inform me that his Majesty wishes to receive farther information on this subject. I shall therefore, Sir, take the liberty to tell you, that he is a little editor of newspapers, in whose shop the letters of news are written, as it is not the custom here to print them: he works

at this himself, as well as copying for the public; and his situation in this town answers to that of the Secretaries of St. Innocent, at Paris. Therefore, it would be a very improper thing to give a Secretaryship of Embassy to a man of this profession, who, besides, in other respects, does not appear to me fit to fill properly such an employment. He would even cease to be able to give intelligence, as soon as he should be publicly recognized to be attached to France, because the persons whom he now holds communication with, would no longer wish, nor dare, to continue it with him. But as he is a sort of *ferret,* who works out, and gets at all that is passing, I think it is necessary to encourage his zeal by some such gratification as forty or fifty pistoles a year, or whatever shall be approved of by his Majesty. I think even that this sort of recompense would have a greater effect upon him than the other, and would make him act with the same zeal he has already shown in the affairs he has been employed in.

VARENGEVILLE.†

* * * * * *

† Varengeville was now Ambassador at Venice. This letter exists in the Archives of the Office for Foreign Affairs, at Paris.

No. 99.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, July 25, 1679.

I have received your letter of the 2d of this month. I wrote by yesterday's post to M. de Rissan,* that it is the King's intention that he should have the gate of the citadel of Pignerol opened, whenever you shall have occasion for it.

You may give paper and ink to the Sieur de Lestang, with the understanding that he is to put into writing whatever he wishes to say; which you will send to me, and I will let you know whether it deserves any consideration.

De Louvois.†

* M. de la Motte de Rissan held the post of "Lieutenant de Roi," in the citadel of Pignerol.

† From the Archives of France.

No. 100.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, August 21, 1679.

* * * * * *

With regard to the Sieur de Lestang, you may give him paper whenever he wishes to write; and afterwards send it to me.

De Louvois.†

No. 101.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Pignerol, Jan. 6, 1680.

* * * * * *

I am obliged, Sir, to inform you that the Sieur de Lestang is become like the Monk I have the care of; that is to say, subject to fits of raving

† From the Archives of France.

madness; from which the Sieur Dubreuil also is not exempt. * * *

De Saint-Mars.†

No. 102.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Matthioli complains of his Treatment, and gives Proofs of Insanity.

Pignerol, Feb. 24, 1680.

The Sieur de Lestang, who has been nearly a year in my custody, complains that he is not treated as a man of his quality, and the minister of a great prince, ought to be. Notwithstanding this, I continue to follow your commands, Sir, most exactly upon this subject, as well as upon all others: I think he is deranged, by the way he talks to me; telling me he converses every day with God and his angels; that they have told him of the death of the Duke of Mantua, and of the Duke of Lorrain;‡ and, as an additional proof of his madness,

† Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

‡ See Note, page 49.

he says that he has the honour of being the near relation of the King, to whom he wishes to write, to complain of the way in which I treat him. I have not thought it right to give him paper or ink for that purpose, perceiving him not to be in his right senses.

DE SAINT-MARS.*

No. 103.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, July 10th, 1680.

I have received, together with your letter of the 4th of this month, that which was joined with it, of which I shall make the proper use. It will be sufficient to make the prisoners in the lower part of the tower confess once a-year.

With regard to the Sieur de Lestang, I wonder at your patience, and that you should wait for an order to treat such a rascal as he deserves, when

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

he is wanting in respect to you. Send me word how it has happened that the individual named Eustache has been able to do what you have sent me word of, and where he got the drugs necessary for the purpose, as I cannot think you would have furnished them to him.

DE LOUVOIS.*

No. 104.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Philippeville, August 16th, 1680.

I have been made acquainted, by your letter of the 7th of this month, with the proposal you make of placing the Sieur de Lestang with the Jacobin Monk, in order to avoid the necessity of having two priests. The King approves of your project, and you have only to execute it when you please.

DE LOUVOIS.†

* From the Archives of France. † Ibid.

No. 105.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Matthioli and the Jacobin placed together.

September 7th, 1680.

Since you, Sir, permitted me to put Matthioli with the Jacobin in the lower part of the tower, the aforesaid Matthioli was for four or five days in the belief that the Jacobin was a man that I had placed with him to watch his actions. Matthioli, who is almost as mad as the Jacobin, walked about with long strides, with his cloak over his nose, crying out that he was not a dupe, but that he knew more than he would say. The Jacobin, who was always seated on his truckle bed, with his elbows resting upon his knees, looked at him gravely, without listening to him. The Signor Matthioli remained always persuaded that it was a spy that had been placed with him, till he was one day disabused, by the Jacobin's getting down from his bed, stark naked, and setting himself to preach, without rhyme or reason,

till he was tired. I and my lieutenants saw all their manœuvres through a hole over the door.

DE SAINT-MARS.*

No. 106.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

October 9th, 1680.

I have only farther, Sir, to acquaint you with the circumstance of the Sieur Matthioli's having given a ring to Blainvilliers, who immediately delivered it to me. I will keep it, till it shall please you, Sir, to give me orders what to do with it.

I am, &c.

DE SAINT-MARS.†

* Extracted from the work of M Roux (Fazillac).

† Ibid.

No. 107.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Particulars respecting the Ring given by Matthioli to Blainvilliers.

October 26th, 1680.

In order to explain to you, Sir, more amply than I have hitherto done, the story of the diamond ring which the Sieur Matthioli gave to Blainvilliers, I shall begin by taking the liberty to tell you that I believe he made him this present as much from fear as from any other cause: this prisoner having previously used very violent language to him, and written abusive sentences with charcoal on the wall of his room, which had obliged that officer to menace him with severe punishment, if he was not more decorous and moderate in his language for the future. When he was put in the tower with the Jacobin, I charged Blainvilliers to tell him, at the same time showing him a cudgel, that it was with that the unruly were rendered manageable, and that if he did not speedily be-

come the latter, he could easily be compelled to it. This message was conveyed to him, and some days afterwards, as Blainvilliers was waiting on him at dinner, he said to him: *Sir, here is a little ring which I wish to give you, and I beg you to accept of it.* Blainvilliers replied to him that *he only took it to deliver it to me, as he could not receive any thing himself from the prisoners.* I think it is well worth fifty or sixty pistoles.

DE SAINT-MARS.*

No. 108.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Versailles, Nov. 2d, 1680.

I have received your letter of the 26th of last month. I am writing to the Sieur du Channoy to make the necessary repairs to the barracks of the citadel of Pignerol: with regard to the brambles which are in the walls, I think it will be better to wait till the spring to have them rooted up,

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

because that will make them die more certainly, and then at the same time mortar might be inserted into the fissures.

You must keep the ring, which the Sieur Matthioli has given to the Sieur de Blainvilliers, in order to restore it to him, if it should ever happen that the King ordered him to be set at liberty.

De Louvois.*

No. 109.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Versailles, Nov. 11th, 1680.

The King has been informed that the Governor of Milan has received the plan of the town and citadel of Pignerol, from an individual named Quadro, who was some time in the prison, to explain the fortifications to one of your nephews; and as it is important for the service of His Majesty, that the Italians should never have any

* From the Archives of France.

communication with the citadel of Pignerol, nor with the prison there, His Majesty has commanded me to let you know, that he wishes you not to allow any one to enter there, without his express order; and his intention is, if you have any soldiers or servants who are Piedmontese, Savoyards, or Italians, that you should get rid of them as quietly as possible, under pretext of their not serving you well.

De Louvois.*

No. 110.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

St. Germain, December 5th, 1680.

Your letter of the 27th of last month has reached me. The King does not wish you to have any soldiers in your company who are Piedmontese, Savoyards, Italians, or natives of the Government of Pignerol. With regard to the three ser-

* From the Archives of France.

vants of this nation, who have been with you for six or seven years, you may keep them, since you are certain of their fidelity.

De Louvois.*

No. 111.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Appointment of Saint-Mars to the Government of Exiles—Measures to be taken by him thereupon.

Versailles, May 12th, 1681.

I read to the King your letter of the 3d of this month, by which his Majesty having discovered the extreme repugnance you have to accept the command of the citadel of Pignerol, he has thought proper to accord to you that of Exiles, vacant by the death of the Duke of Lesdiguières; whither he wishes you to transport those of the prisoners who are under your care, whom he shall think it important not to entrust to any other

* From the Archives of France.

hands but yours. I shall take care to solicit at the office of M. de Croissy* for the grants of the aforesaid government, of which, as the salary does not exceed four thousand livres, His Majesty will continue to you the five hundred livres a month he gave you at Pignerol, by means of which your emoluments will be as considerable as those of the Governors of the great places in Flanders.

I have requested the Sieur du Channoy to go with you to visit the buildings at Exiles, and to make there a list of the repairs absolutely necessary for the lodging of the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower, who are, I think, the only ones his Majesty will have transferred to Exiles.

Send me a list of all the prisoners under your care, and write opposite to each name all that you know of the reasons why they were arrested.

With regard to the two in the lower part of the tower, you need only designate them by this name, without adding any thing else.

* Charles Colbert, Marquis de Croissi, brother of the great Colbert, was employed in many embassies, which he conducted with ability and success. In 1679 he succeeded Arnaud de Pomponne as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He died in 1696.

The King expects that, during the little time you will be absent from the citadel of Pignerol, when you go with the Sieur du Channoy to Exiles, you will arrange the guarding of your prisoners in such a manner, that no accident may happen to them, and that they may have no intercourse with any one, any more than they have hitherto had during the time they have been under your charge.

De Louvois.*

No. 112.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Precautions for the Journey of the Prisoners from Pignerol to Exiles.

Versailles, June 9th, 1681.

I send you the necessary grants, as Governor of Exiles, which the King has thought good to have sent to you. The intention of his Majesty is, that as soon as the room at Exiles, which you

* From the Archives of France.

shall judge the most proper for the secure keeping of the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower, shall be in a state to receive them, you will send them out of the citadel of Pignerol in a litter, and conduct them there under the escort of your troop, for the march of whom the orders are hereunto joined: and immediately after the departure of the aforesaid prisoners, it is his Majesty's intention that you should go to Exiles, to take possession of the government, and to make it, for the future, your residence.

And because his Majesty does not wish that the remainder of the prisoners at present under your charge, who are to remain in the citadel of Pignerol, should be left to the care of a Captain of a Battalion, who may be changed from day to day, I address to you an order from the King to have the Sieur de Villebois recognized as Commandant of the aforesaid citadel of Pignerol, until the return of M. de Rissan, or the arrival of the person whom his Majesty shall entrust with the command of the aforesaid citadel. In case the health of the aforesaid Sieur de Rissan does not permit him to return there, you will, if you please, acquaint the aforesaid Sieur de Villebois with it, to

whom the Sieur du Channoy has orders to pay two crowns a day, for the support of those three prisoners.

You will see by the orders of the King hereunto joined, that your company is to be reduced to forty-five men, to commence from the 15th of this month; and by the statement which accompanies them, the footing upon which it is to be paid, as well as what the King has ordered you for the subsistence of the two before-named prisoners, whom his Majesty expects that you will guard with the same exactitude you have made use of hitherto. Therefore, it only remains for me to recommend you to give me, from time to time, intelligence respecting them.

With regard to the effects belonging to the Sieur Matthioli, which are in your possession, you will have them taken to Exiles, in order to be given back to him, if ever his Majesty should order him to be set at liberty.

You will receive the orders I have mentioned by the first occasion.

De Louvois.*

* From the Archives of France.

No. 113.

LOUVOIS TO ST. MARS.

Versailles, June 11th, 1681.

I have acquainted the King with the contents of your letter of the 13th of last month, and with the list of the repairs necessary to be made to the tower at Exiles, which you deem the most proper residence for the prisoners whom his Majesty leaves under your care. The King has thought fit to grant you a thousand crowns, as well for the aforesaid repairs, as for those which you shall judge necessary to make in your own lodging; which, as soon as you receive this, you will take care to have done immediately, as if the expense was to come out of your own pocket: and as soon as the prison shall be in a fit state, it is the intention of his Majesty that you should transfer the aforesaid two prisoners to it, according to what I have already commanded you in my last letter; and in conformity with that and the order which was joined to it, you will then deliver to the Sieur

de Villebois the command of the citadel of Pignerol. DE LOUVOIS.*

No. 114.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Versailles, July 9th, 1681.

I have received your letter of the 29th of last month. You may have the doors you have need of, for the security of your prisoners, made at Exiles, without taking the trouble of having them carried from Pignerol.

I have written to the *Père Lachaise* ‡ for the benefice, which you ask of the King for one of your children, to whom I trust his Majesty will grant it. DE LOUVOIS.†

* From the Archives of France. † Ibid.

‡ Francis d'Aix de La Chaise, for thirty-four years confessor to Lewis the Fourteenth, was descended from a gentleman's family, and great nephew of the Père Cotton, the confessor of Henry the Fourth. He was born August 25th 1624, and died January 20th 1709. He was, for a Jesuit, remarkably mild, tolerant, humane, and unambitious. The king continued to confess to him till his death, though his intellects had been for some time entirely extinguished. "Il se faisoit encore," says St. Simon, "apporter le cadavre, pour dépêcher avec lui les affaires accoutumées."

No. 115.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Precautions for the Security and Concealment of the Prisoners at Exiles.

Pignerol, July 12, 1681.
Just setting off for Exiles.

In order that the prisoners may not be seen (at Exiles), they will not leave their chamber when they hear mass; and in order that they may be kept the more securely, one of my lieutenants will sleep above them, and there will be two sentinels night and day, who will watch the whole round of the tower, without its being possible for them and the prisoners to see and to speak to one another, or even to hear any thing of one another. They will be the soldiers of my company, who will be always the sentinels over the prisoners. There is only a confessor, about whom I have my doubts; but if you do not disapprove, I will give them the curate of Exiles instead, who is a good man, and very old, whom I will forbid, on the part of his

Majesty, to enquire who these prisoners are, or their names, or what they have been, or to speak of them in any way, or to receive from them by word of mouth, or by writing, either communications or notes.

I am, &c.

De Saint-Mars.*

No. 116.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Departure of Saint Mars from Pignerol ordered to be deferred, in order that he might receive Catinat there.

Versailles, July 22d, 1681.

I have received your letter of the 12th of this month, by which I see that the repairs which you have ordered to be made at Exiles will not permit you to leave Pignerol before the end of next month. As the service of the King will perhaps require that you should remain there all the following month, it would be well that you should

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

advance the aforesaid repairs of Exiles as little as possible, in order that you may have a pretext for not leaving Pignerol till the first days of the month of October; taking care to act in such a manner, that your continuing to remain there may not appear to be the result of voluntary delay.

I am about to send the necessary order for the repayment of the money you have expended for your prisoners, and you will receive it by the next post.

You will find joined with this letter a packet for M. de Pianesse,* which I request you to deliver to him without fail.

De Louvois.†

No. 117.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Fontainebleau, August 3d, 1681.

Your letter of the 23rd of last month has been delivered to me. The King approves of your

* The Marquis de Pianesse was one of the Ministers of the Court of Turin.

† From the Archives of France.

going to see the Marquis de Pianesse at his country house, and of your making a journey to Turin, if you desire it, provided you do not sleep out of the citadel of Pignerol more than one night at a time. With regard to the journey to Exiles, and the leave of absence you ask for the Sieur Tourtebat, whom you wish to take with you, you will have seen by my former letters, that the intention of the King is that you should not go there.

De Louvois.*

No. 118.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Orders for the reception of Catinat at Pignerol.

Fontainebleau, August 13th, 1681.

The King having ordered M. de Catinat to go as soon as possible to Pignerol, for the same affair which before took him there at the commencement of the year 1679, I send you these few lines by order of his Majesty, to give you intelligence thereof, in order that you may prepare an apartment for him, in which he can remain concealed

* From the Archives of France.

for three weeks or a month; and also to tell you that when he shall send to let you know that he is arrived at the place where you went to meet him in the aforesaid year 1679, it is the intention of his Majesty that you should go there again to meet him, and that you should conduct him into the prison of the citadel of the aforesaid Pignerol, with every kind of precaution, in order that no one may know he is with you. I do not say any thing to you about assisting him with your servants, your horses, and whatever carriages he may have occasion for, because I have no doubt but you will do with pleasure on these heads, whatever he shall ask you.

If between this time and his arrival any packet for him should be addressed to you either from Piedmont or from Italy, you will keep it, if you please, to deliver to him.

De Louvois.*

* From the Archives of France.

No. 119.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Fontainebleau, August 23d, 1681.

I have received your letter of the 13th of this month, which requires no answer, except to say that I have given orders for a French clerk to be sent, to have the direction of the Post-office at Pignerol; by means of whom we shall be assured that no further abuses can be committed with regard to the letters.

De Louvois.*

No. 120.

LOUVOIS TO SAINT-MARS.

Fontainebleau, Sept. 20th, 1681.

This word is only for the purpose of acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 16th of last month. The King will not disapprove of

* From the Archives of France.

your visiting, from time to time, the last prisoner who has been placed in your charge, after he shall have been established in his new prison, and shall have left that where he is at present confined. His Majesty desires that you will execute the order he has sent you for your establishment at Exiles. I beg you to deliver the packet hereunto joined into M. de Richemont's own hands.

De Louvois.*

No. 121.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Exiles, Dec. 4th, 1681.

As there is always one of my two prisoners ill, they give me as much occupation as I have ever had with any of those I have hitherto guarded.

Although, Sir, you have the kindness to give me permission to go, from time to time, to Casale,

* From the Archives of France. To the name of Richemont is appended in the original the following note, in the hand-writing of Saint-Mars; "This name means M. de Catinat, whom I had then shut up with me at Pignerol."

I dare not do it, lest during my absence, you should address any packets to me for M. de Pianesse.

De Saint-Mars.*

No. 122.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Description of the Apartment and manner of Confinement of the Prisoners at Exiles.

Exiles, March 11th, 1682.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you were pleased to do me the honour to write to me on the 27th of last month, in which you acquaint me, Sir, that it is important my two prisoners should have no communication with any one. Since the first time that you, Sir, gave me this order, I have guarded these two prisoners, who are under my care, as severely and exactly as I formerly did Messieurs Fouquet and Lauzun, who could not

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac)

boast that they had either sent or received any news, while they were in confinement. These prisoners can hear the people speak as they pass along the road which is at the bottom of the tower; but they, if they wished it, could not make themselves heard; they can see the persons on the hill which is before their windows, but cannot themselves be seen on account of the bars which are placed across their room. There are two sentinels of my company always night and day, on each side of the tower, at a reasonable distance, who can see the window of the prisoners obliquely. They are ordered to take care that no one speaks to them, and that they do not cry out from their windows; and to make the passengers walk on, if they wish to stop in the path, or on the side of the hill. My own room being joined to the tower, and having no other look-out except towards this path, I hear and see every thing, even my two sentinels, who are by this means always kept alert.

As for the inside of the tower, I have divided it in such a manner, that the priest who says mass to them cannot see them, on account of a curtain I have made, which covers their double doors.

The servants, who bring their food, put whatever is necessary for the prisoners upon a table on the outside, and my lieutenant takes it and carries it in to them. No one speaks to them except myself, my officer, M. Vigneron (the confessor), and a physician from Fragelas, which is six leagues from hence, who only sees them in my presence. With regard to their linen and other necessaries, I take the same precautions which I did with my former prisoners.

I am, &c.

De Saint-Mars.*

No. 123.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Exiles, Dec. 23d, 1685.

My prisoners are still ill and in a course of medicine; they are, however, perfectly tranquil.

De Saint-Mars.†

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

† Ibid.

No. 124.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Saint-Mars is made Governor of the Islands of Saint Margaret.

Exiles, January 20th, 1687.

SIR,

I am most grateful for the new favour, which I have just received from his Majesty, (the government of the Islands of Saint Margaret). If you order me to go there without delay, I would request to be permitted to take the road through Piedmont, on account of the great quantity of snow that there is between this place and Embrun; and, on my return, which shall be as quick as I can possibly make it, I hope you will approve of my going by the way, to take leave of the Duke of Savoy, from whom I have always received so much kindness. I will give such good orders for the guarding of my prisoner, that I can answer to you, Sir, for his entire security, as well as for his not now, nor ever, holding inter-

course with my lieutenant, whom I have forbid to speak to him, which is punctually obeyed. If I take him with me to the Islands, I think the most secure conveyance will be a chair covered with oil cloth, in which there would enter a sufficiency of air, without its being possible for any one to see or speak to him during the journey, not even the soldiers whom I shall select to be near the chair. This conveyance will be less embarrassing than a litter, which is liable often to break.

I am, &c.

DE SAINT-MARS.*

No. 125.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

From the Islands of St. Margaret,
March 23d, 1687.

* * * * * *

I have been here for the last thirty days, of which I have passed twenty-six in bed, with a con-

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

tinual fever. I have taken so much powder of bark, that, for the last three days, I have been free from fever. I have sent to Toulon for my litter, in order to go from hence the 26th of this month, and I hope to be at Exiles in eight days, by the Embrun and Briançon road. As soon as I shall have had the honour of receiving your commands, Sir, I shall set forth again with my prisoner, whom I promise to conduct here in all security, without any one seeing or speaking to him. He shall not hear mass after he leaves Exiles, till he is lodged in the prison which is preparing for him here, to which a chapel is attached.

* * * * * *

I pledge my honour to you for the entire security of my prisoner.

I am, &c.

De Saint-Mars. *

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

No. 126.

SAINT-MARS TO LOUVOIS.

Arrival of Matthioli at the Islands of Saint Margaret.

From the Islands of Saint Margaret,
May 3d, 1687.

Sir,

I arrived here the 30th of last month: I was only twelve days on the journey, in consequence of the illness of my prisoner, occasioned, as he said, by not having as much air as he wished. I can assure you, Sir, that no one has seen him, and that the manner in which I have guarded and conducted him during all the journey, makes every body try to conjecture who he is.

My prisoner's bed was so old and worn out, as well as every thing he made use of, both table linen and furniture, that it was not worth while to bring them here; they only sold for thirteen crowns. * * * *

I have given to the eight porters, who brought the chair from Turin, and my prisoner to this

place, (including the hire of the aforesaid chair) two hundred and three livres, which I have paid out of my own pocket.

De Saint-Mars.†

No. 127.

SAINT-MARS TO THE MINISTER.‡

Relation of the conduct of two Protestant Ministers.

From the Islands of Saint Margaret,
June 4th, 1692.

* * * * * *

The first of the ministers who have been sent here, sings psalms night and day with a loud voice, expressly to make it be known who he is. I desired him, in vain, several times to discontinue this, on pain of severe punishment; which I have at length been obliged to inflict upon him, as well as on his comrade, named Salves, who

† Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

‡ Probably Barbezieux.

writes things upon his pewter vessels, and upon his linen, in order to make known that he is imprisoned unjustly, on account of the purity of his faith.

DE SAINT-MARS.*

No. 128.

Extract from the Register of the Bastille, published in the Work entitled "La Bastille Dévoilée."

Names and qualities of the Prisoners.

An old prisoner from Pignerol, obliged always to wear a mask of black velvet, whose name and quality have never been known.

Dates of their Entries.

September 18th, 1698. At three o'clock in the afternoon.

Reference to the Journal.

Dujonca, Volume 37.

Reasons for their detention.

It was never known.

* Extracted from the work of M. Roux (Fazillac).

OBSERVATIONS.

This is the famous Man in the Mask, whom no one has ever seen or known.

This prisoner was brought to the Bastille by M. de Saint-Mars in his litter, when he took possession of the Government of the Bastille, coming from his Government of the Islands of Saint Margaret and Saint Honorat, and whom he had before had with him at Pignerol.

This prisoner was treated with great distinction by the Governor, and was only seen by him and M. de Rosarges, Major of the Fortress, who alone had the care of him.

No. 129.

Second Extract from the Register of the Bastille, published in the Work entitled "La Bastille Dévoilée."

Dates of the Deaths.

November 19th, 1703.

Reference to the Journal.

Dujonca, Volume 8th.

OBSERVATIONS.

Died November 19th, 1703, aged 45, or there-

abouts; buried at St. Paul's the next day at four in the afternoon, under the name of Marchiali, in the presence of M. de Rosarges, Major of the Fortress, and of M. Reilh, Surgeon-Major of the Bastille, who signed their names to the extract of the Burial Register of St. Paul's. His burial cost forty livres.

This prisoner remained at the Bastille five years and sixty-two days, the day of his burial not included.

He was only ill for some hours, and died almost suddenly; he was buried in a winding-sheet of new linen; and for the most part every thing that was found in his chamber was burnt, such as every part of his bed, including the mattresses, his tables, chairs, and other utensils, which were all reduced to powder and to cinders, and thrown into the drains. The rest of the things, such as the silver, copper, and pewter, were melted. This prisoner was lodged in the third chamber of the tower *Bertaudière*, which room was scraped and filed quite to the stone, and fresh white-washed from the top to the bottom. The doors and windows were burnt like the rest.

It is remarkable that, in the name of Marchi-

ali, which was given him in the Burial Register of St. Paul's, are to be found the exact letters of these two words, the one Latin, the other French, *Hic Amiral*, here is the Admiral.*

No. 130.

Extract from the Register of Burials of the Church of Saint Paul, at Paris.

The year one thousand seven hundred and three, on the nineteenth of November, died at the Bastille, Marchiali, aged forty-five years or thereabouts; whose body was interred in the burial-ground of this parish, the twentieth of the aforesaid month, in the presence of M. Rosarges, Major of the Bastille, and of M. Reilh, Surgeon-Major of the Bastille, who have affixed their signatures.

Collated exactly with the original, and delivered by us, the undersigned, Bachelor in Theology, and Vicar of Saint Paul, at Paris, this Tuesday the ninth of February, 1790.

Signed, POITEVIN.

* The discovery of this ridiculous and strained anagram was one of the causes which led to the false supposition,

No. 131.

Extract from the Work entitled "*La Correspondance Interceptée,*" by M. Lewis Dutens, published in 1789.

In order to treat this subject (that of the Iron Mask) methodically, I will begin with what the Duke de Choiseul has often related to me. Lewis the Fifteenth one day told him, that he was acquainted with the history of the prisoner with the Mask. The Duke begged the King to tell him who he was, but he could get no other answer from him, except, that all the conjectures which had been hitherto made with regard to the prisoner, were false. Some time afterwards, Madame de Pompadour, at the request of the Duke, pressed the King to explain himself upon this subject. Lewis the Fifteenth upon this told her, that he believed he was the Minister of an Italian Prince.

that the Iron Mask was either the Duke de Beaufort, or the Count de Vermandois, both of whom were great Admirals of France.

No. 132.

Extract from the article on the Iron Mask in the Work entitled "*Mélanges d'Histoire et de Littérature,*" by Mr. Quintin Craufurd.

BEFORE the publication of the "*Correspondance Interceptée,*" I had heard it said, that M. de Choiseul had spoken to Lewis the Fifteenth on the subject of the masked prisoner; but that he had not been able to obtain any satisfactory answer. I addressed myself to the Abbé Barthelemi and to the Abbé Beliardi, who had both lived in intimacy with M. de Choiseul: they acquainted me that it was at their request the Duke de Choiseul had spoken upon this subject to Lewis the Fifteenth; that the King had answered him, that he believed the prisoner was a minister of one of the courts of Italy; but that the Duke observed that this conversation appeared to embarrass him. The Abbé Beliardi told me in proper terms, that the King wished to evade the subject. They then begged M. de Choiseul to engage Madame de Pompadour to speak to the King. She did so; but the answer of Lewis the Fifteenth to his mistress was not more instructive, than that which he had given to his Minister.

No. 133.

Letter from the Baron de Heiss to the Authors of the "*Journal Encyclopèdique,*" on the subject of the Iron Mask; published in that Journal, in 1770.

GENTLEMEN,

Since the publication of the anecdote respecting the Man in the Iron Mask, which M. de Voltaire has given us in his "*Siècle de Louis* XIV.," I have been always very curious to discover who this prisoner could be; but all my researches had hitherto failed in giving me any information which could content me; chance has placed in my hands a detached number of a work, of which the title is "*Histoire abrégée de l'Europe,*" for the month of August 1687, printed that same year at Leyden, by "*Claude Jordan.*" At the article Mantua, I found the letter, which I have the honour to send you a copy of, translated from the Italian. It appears that this Secretary of the Duke of Mantua, who is there mentioned, might very well be the Man in the Iron Mask, transferred from Pignerol to the Islands of Saint Margaret, and from thence to the Bastille, in 1690, when M. de Saint-Mars

was made governor of it. I am the more inclined to believe this, because, as M. de Voltaire, and all those who have made researches on this subject, have remarked, there did not at that time disappear any prince, or person of consequence, in any part of Europe.

If you, Gentlemen, find any appearance of probability in my remark, and if you think it can interest the public, you are welcome to insert it in your Journal, &c.

THE BARON DE HEISS,
Formerly Captain of the Regiment of Alsace.

Phalsbourg,
June 28, 1770.

Letter on the subject of the Man in the Iron Mask, announced in the preceding one.

GENTLEMEN,

One of my friends tells me, that he has read in the "*Histoire abrégée de l'Europe*," (Vol. ii. p. 33.) that it was said, that the Duke of Mantua had had the intention of selling his capital town; but that the author of this History did not believe it.

You are ill-informed; it is certain that this affair was negociated, and that it was much ad-

vanced towards a conclusion. The secretary of the Duke, who had much influence with his master, dissuaded him from this design; but the doing so cost him very dear, as you shall soon learn.

This faithful Minister made the Duke understand, that it was necessary for his interest and his honour to preserve his Duchy, and thus made him change his intention; he did still more, he obliged him to unite himself with the other Princes of Italy, in order to oppose the designs of France. It was he who negociated the interview of the different princes, which took place at Venice last winter during the Carnival: this time was chosen in order the better to conceal the plans which were in agitation. You are without doubt aware, that it is not an extraordinary circumstance to see many princes and persons of condition at Venice during that period. This Secretary went afterwards to Rome, where he remained some time; he then visited almost all the Courts of Italy; he went to Venice and Genoa, and he succeeded every where so well, that he had almost entirely detached all those powers from the interests of France. Finally he went to Turin with the same intention. As he believed his negociations to be very secret,

he often visited the Marquis D'Arcy, the French Ambassador at the Court of Savoy; but what can escape the penetrating eyes of France? The minister of that crown had been informed of all the designs of the Secretary, before his arrival at Turin. He, however, paid him many civilities, asked him very often to dinner, and finally invited him to come and hunt with him, at some distance from Turin. The Secretary, who had no time to lose, and who thought the moment of the absence of the French ambassador very proper for his negociations, excused himself at first upon the plea of his having no horses; the Ambassador offered to lend them to him, and the Secretary dared no longer refuse, from fear lest some portion of the truth should be suspected. The day for the hunting being arrived, they set off together; but they were hardly at the distance of a league from the town, when the Secretary was surrounded by ten or twelve horsemen, who seized him, disguised him, masked him, and conducted him to Pignerol. Without doubt he was well aware who had played him this trick, but he had no means of resistance. At Pignerol he was thought to be too near Italy, and, though he was guarded very carefully, it was

feared that the walls might tell tales; he was therefore removed from thence, and conducted to the Islands of Saint Margaret, where he at present is, under the care of M. de Saint-Mars, who is the Governor. This is a piece of news doubtless very surprising, but not on that account the less true.

I am, &c.

To this letter are joined these reflections:—There are reports respecting a journey made by the Duke of Mantua to Vienna. Some politicians think that it is the affair which happened to his Secretary which is the cause of his journey, and that he has a design of making an alliance with the Emperor and the King of Spain.*

* To this letter M. Delort adds the following note, "In 1782 or 1783, there died at Turin a Marquis de Pancalier de Prie, among whose manuscripts was also found the anecdote of this Secretary of the Duke of Mantua. All the Italian newspapers published it; but although it was considered as a new idea, it did not make a great sensation."

THE END.

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